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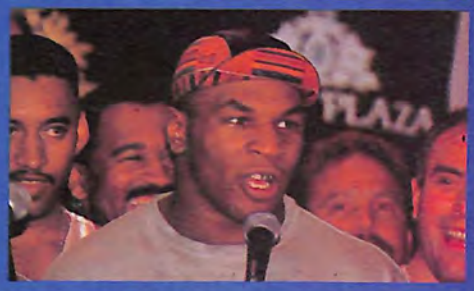

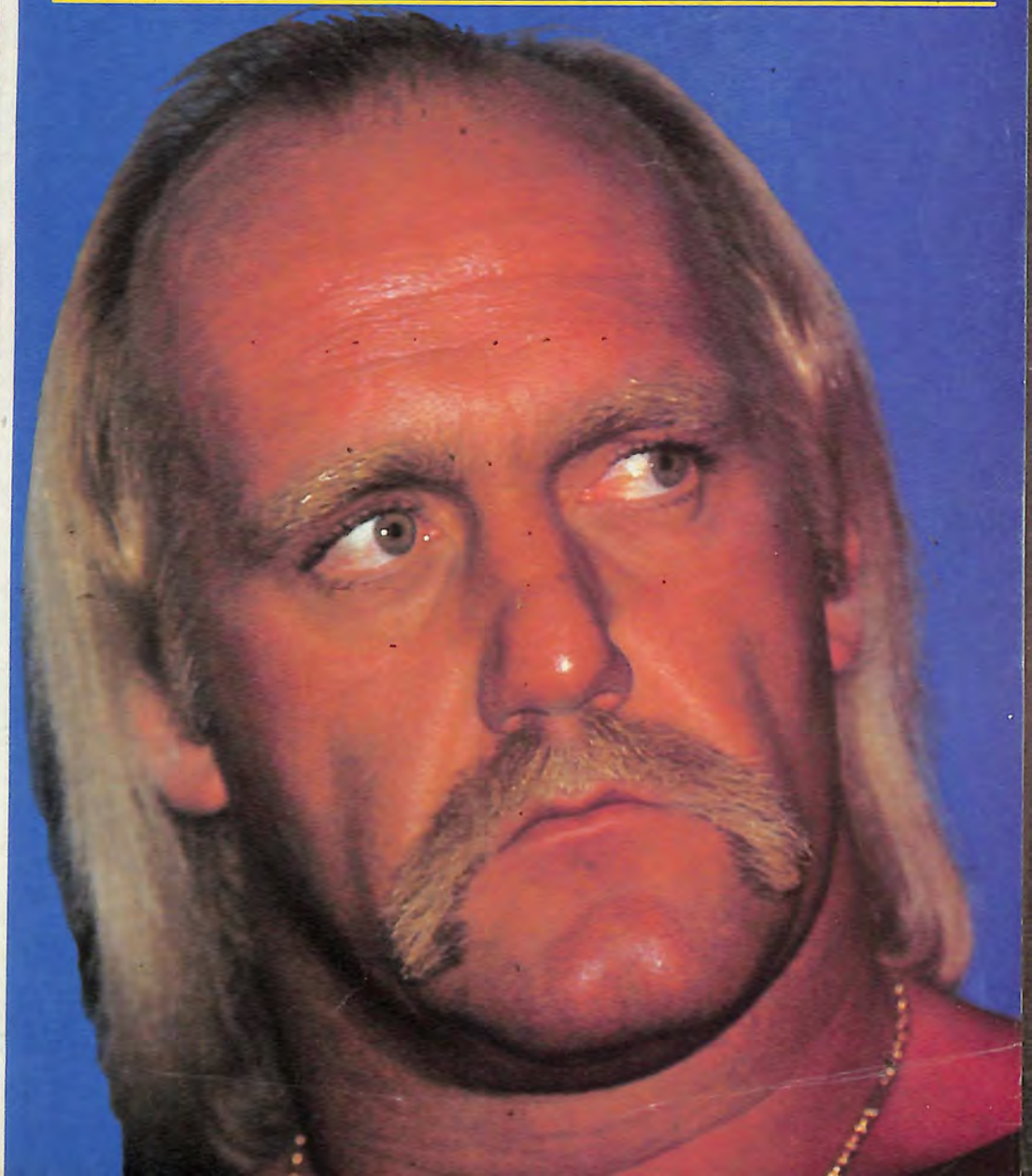

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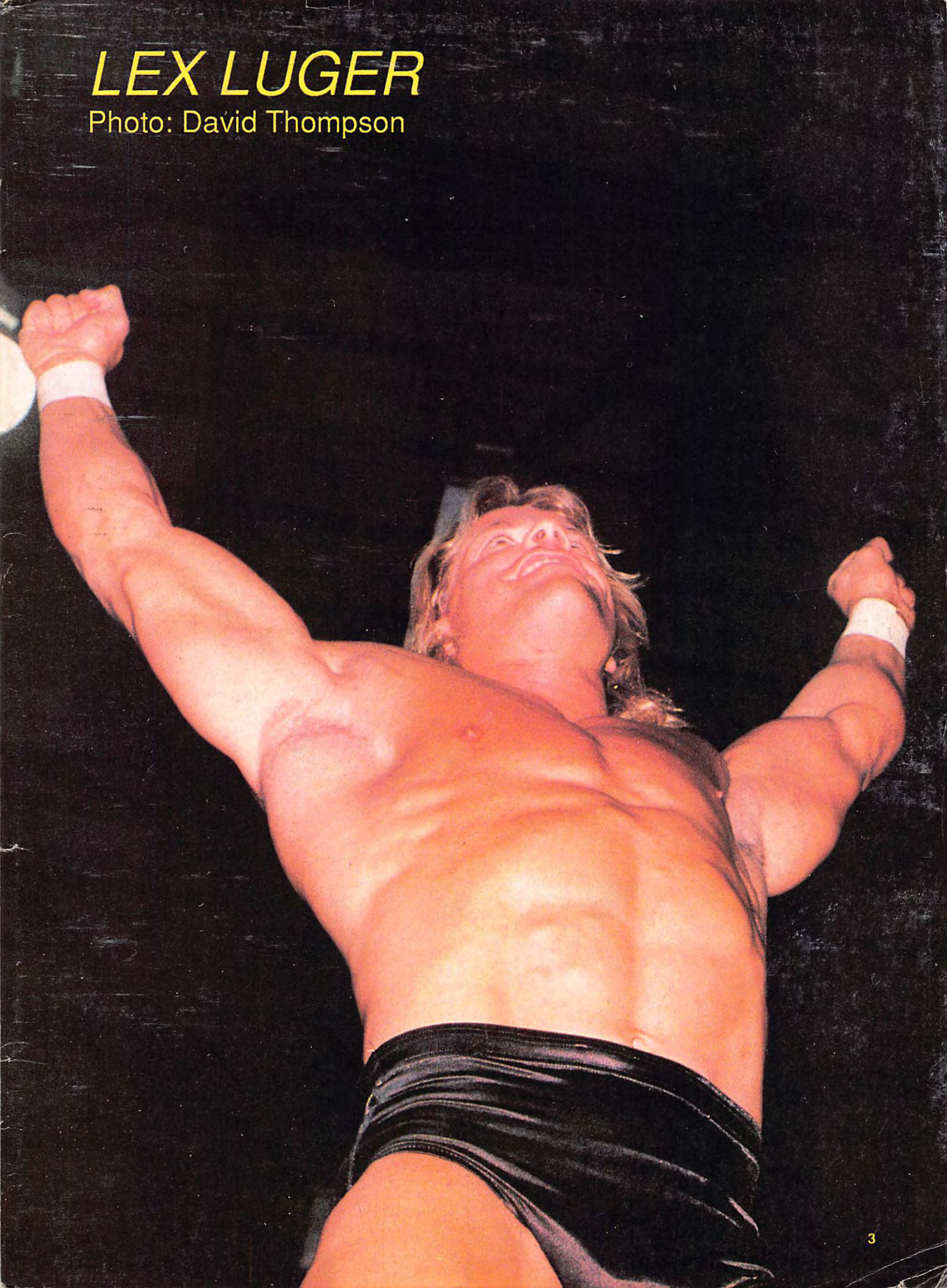

LEX LUGER

Photo: David Thompson

SCOTT "GATOR" HALL

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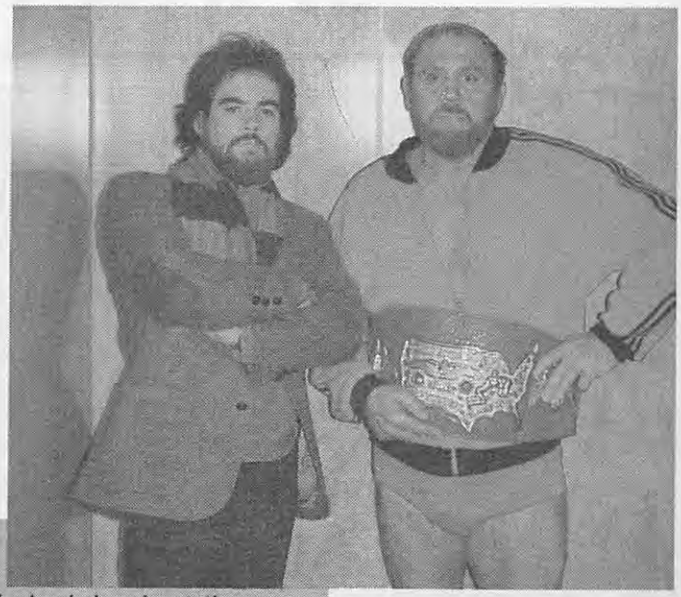
TITO SANTANA

Photo: Matt DeLuca

EDITORIAL

A VIEW FROM THE CHEAP SEATS!



Commentary by editor—in—chief Michael O'Hara

As we enter into a brand, new decade, we must fondly look back at the 1980's and reflect upon the incredible changes that have taken place within the grapplin' game.

The transformation of the mat sport from a variety of regional booking offices into a handful of powerful conglomerates was startling and quick. Many changes were for the better, while others certainly hurt wrestling's already dubious reputation. Thanks in great part to cable television, the United States wrestling scene had become controlled by two major promotions—the National Wrestling Alliance and the World Wrestling Federation. They are the only games in town.

The W.W.F. took off with an incredible lead in 1984 with the acquisition of such stellar attractions as Hulk Hogan, Roddy Piper, Paul Orndorff and countless others. The ambitious promotion built an incredible grappling arsenal with the finest array of mat talent available. For most fans in the United States,the W.W.F. was the only true major league grunt 'n' groan group.

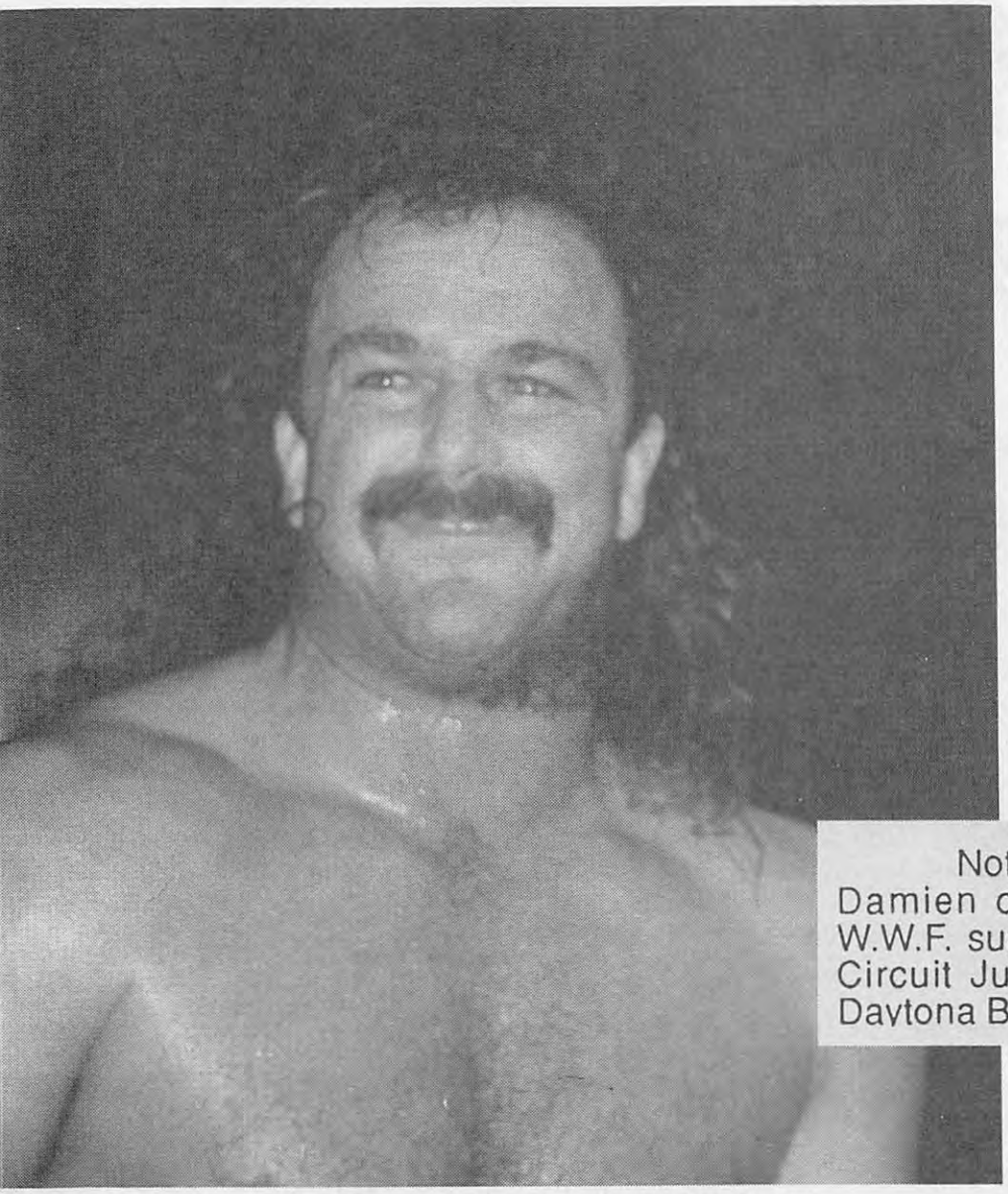
It has taken the N.W.A. close to six years to make any serious inroads into the W.W.F.'s popularity, but at the tail end of 1989, Ted Turner's Atlanta—based wrestling operation was beginning to pick up speed and wrestling fans are taking notice. The W.W.F. has been taking notice too.

While this "war of the wrestling giants" continues,the handful of regional promotions are hard at work in developing that "personal touch" to their organizations. The American Wrestling Association, hurt by the constant raid on their talent pool over the last few years, is on the comeback trail with their new tag team concept. World Class Championship Wrestling of Dallas, Texas has merged with the Continental Wrestling Association of Memphis, Tennessee to form the new United States Wrestling Alliance. Regional offices in Alabama, Oregon and Florida have held on to their audiences and independents continue to come in and out of existence in rapid succession.

In whatever form, professional wrestling will survive. It is a sport that remains in a constant state of change. For those of you who feel as if the mat wars reached their peak in the 1980's, HOLD ON! Get ready for the 1990's because you haven't seen anything yet!

Michael O'Hara

JAKE ROBERTS:



Has Jake fallen from grace with his many, loyal fans?
Photo:DeLuca

Circuit Judge Gayle Graziano of Daytona Beach, Florida did something to Rick Rude, Ted DiBiase and Andre the Giant have tried on numerous occasions, but failed to do—pin Jake "the Snake" Roberts! The upset victory was not gained in the squared circle, but in a court room as the popular W.W.F. mat master failed in his attempt to convince a jury of his innocence in connection with an assault and battery charge.

Jake, a well-known grappler whose trademark is to pull his pet snake, Damien, out of a burlap bag and let it crawl all over his beaten opponents, was guilty of charges that he punched a man during an argument over the quality of women in the Daytona Beach, Florida area!

Roberts and postmatch victim, John Bartlett, a 27 year-old, five-foot-seven-inch, 160-pounder, who is a Daytona Beach resident, were bar hopping throughout the area. As the two men headed to an after hours "go-go" bar, they became engaged in a heated discussion over the quality of women in the region. Bartlett claimed that Jake, whose real name is Aurelian Smith, Jr., stopped the car and asked him to get out of the car. It was then that the pro-wrestler allegedly clobbered his acquaintance, who suffered several broken bones around the

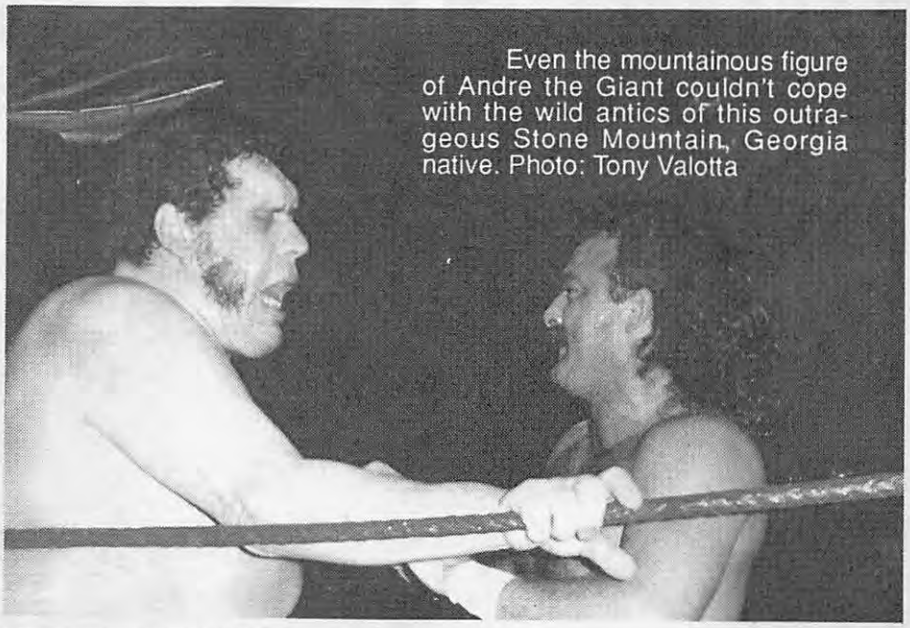
Not even Jake's trusty friend Damien could save the popular W.W.F. superstar from the wrath of Circuit Judge Gayle Graziano of Daytona Beach, Florida.

PINNED BY ASSAULT & BATTERY CHARGES!

cheek and eye. Jake stands by his claim that he was acting in self-defence.

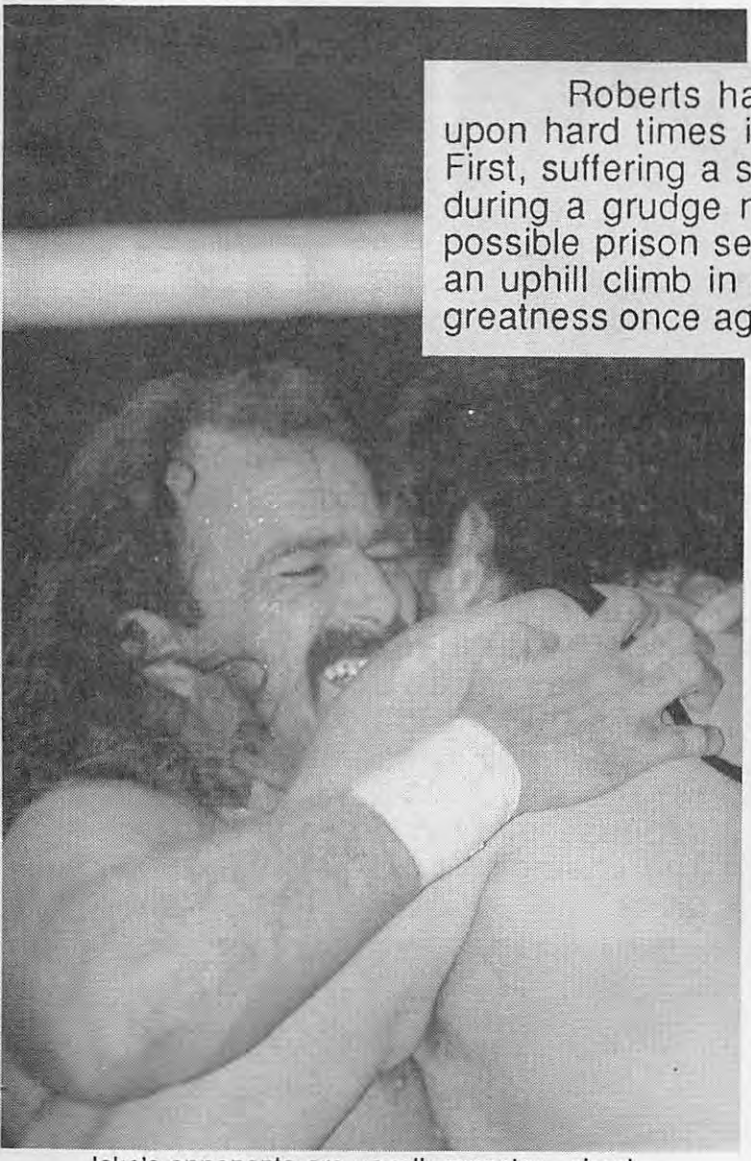
Judge Garziano ordered Roberts locked up immediately after the guilty verdict was rendered, revoking his $2,500 bail, but was later released after posting $10,000 bond. Jake's sentence could range anywhere from lengthy probation to approximately three years. The World Wrestling Federation is doing everything in its power to gain freedom for "the Snake", who is oneof the top attractions in the Federation.

Considering that this is Jake's first offense and he has engaged in quite a bit of charity work over the last few years, let's hope that we see him back where he belongs—in the wrestling ring! We'll give you an update in the next issue of GOLD BELT WRESTLING.

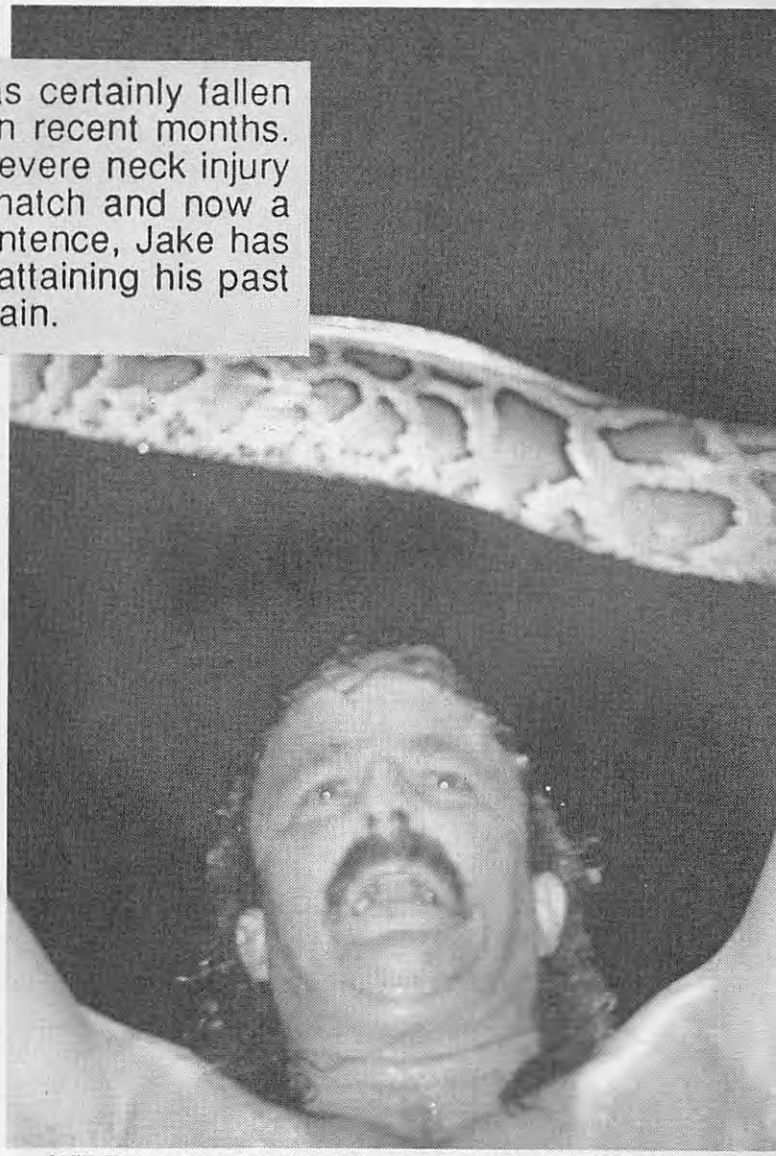


Even the mountainous figure of Andre the Giant couldn't cope with the wild antics of this outrageous Stone Mountain, Georgia native. Photo: Tony Valotta

Roberts has certainly fallen upon hard times in recent months. First, suffering a severe neck injury during a grudge match and now a possible prison sentence, Jake has an uphill climb in attaining his past greatness once again.



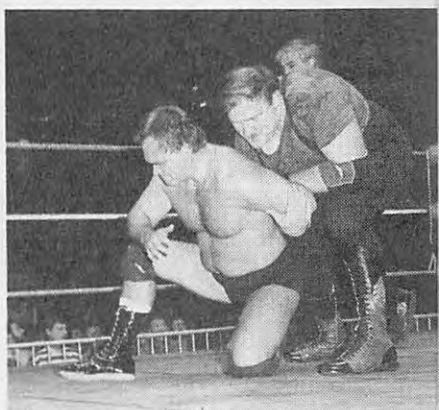
Jake's opponents are usually monster—sized brawlers, but this time his victim stood five-foot-seven-inches in height!
Photo: Sandy DeLuca



Will Robert's celebrity status work against him in this instance? If so, we might not see "the Snake" in center ring for a long time to come.
Photo DeLuca

ZBYSZKO vs. SLAUGHTER: and the FATE of the A.W.A. HANGS in the BALANCE!

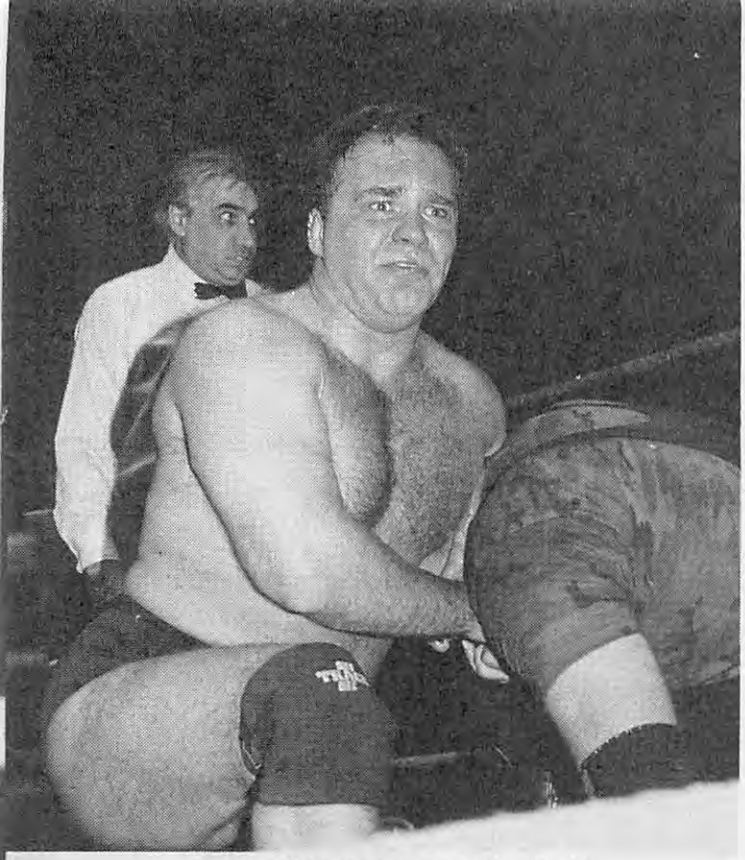
photos and text by Tony Valotta



Slaughter holds the champion at bay with a hammerlock.

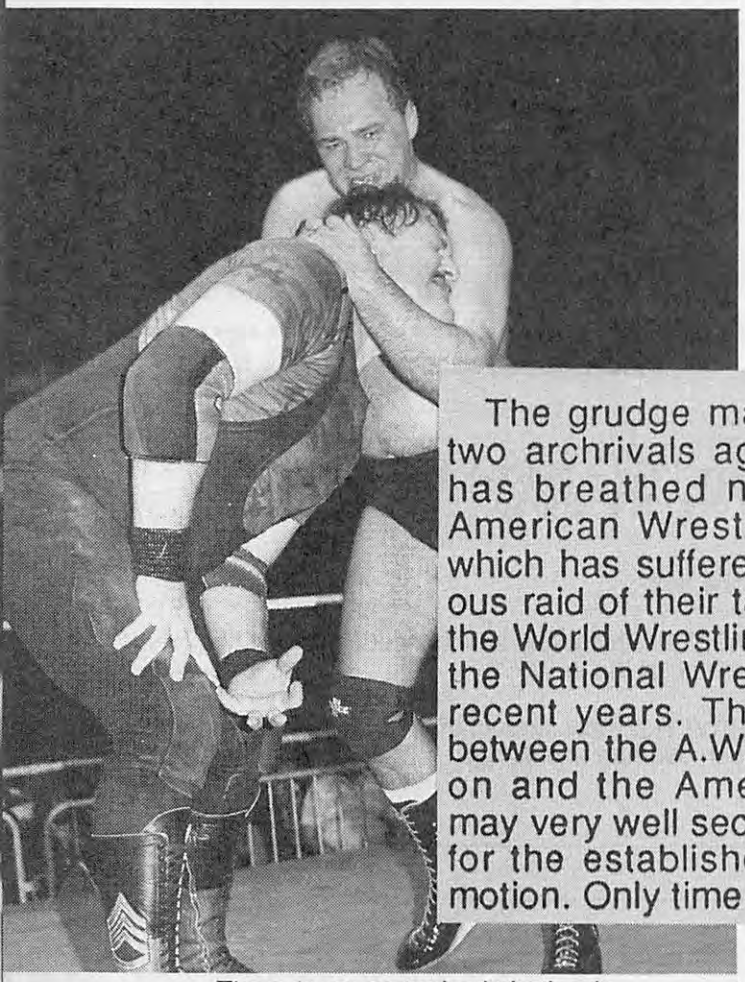
There certainly is no love between Sgt. Slaughter and Larry Zbyszko! The popular drill sergeant upended "the new Living Legend" for the A.W.A. Americas championship several years ago and the feud has grown ever since. Slaughter, holding on to the Americas belt, is determined to garner the A.W.A. World's title, at the expense of Zbyszko once again. The champion no doubt has other plans.

A side headlock gives Zbyszko a momentary advantage.

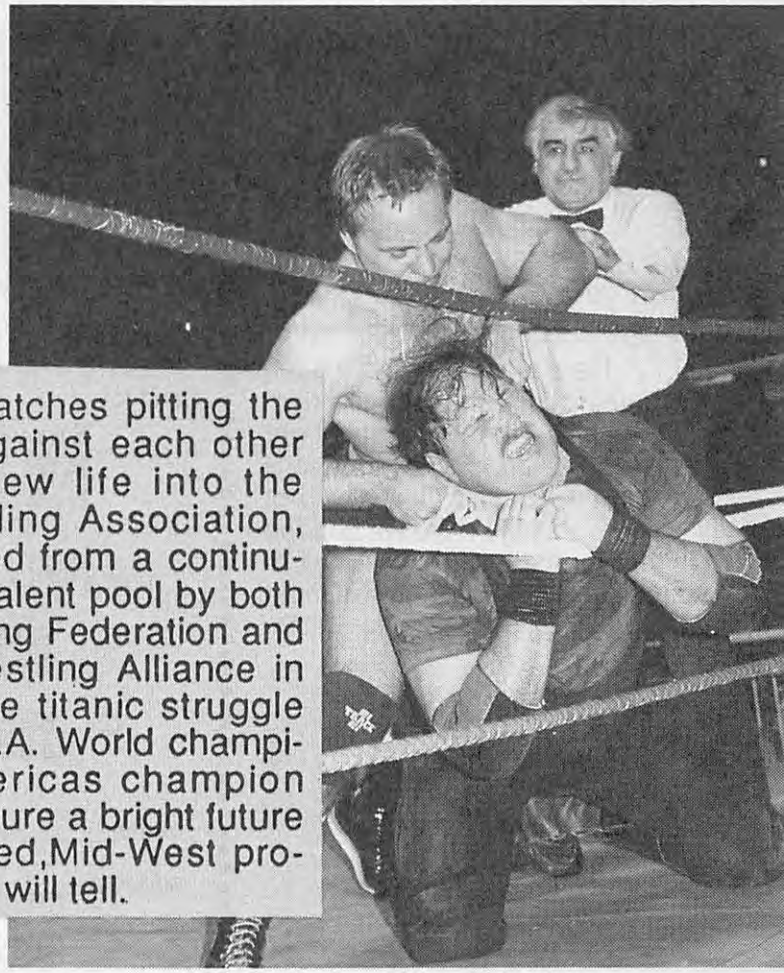


Larry takes every opportunity to jeer at the audience.

"The Sarge" went to apply his deadly "Cobra Clutch" too soon as the dazed A.W.A. kingpin made his way over to the ropes, forcing a break in the hold.



There is no mutual admiration in this match!



When all else fails, Zybszko resorts to vile, nasty tactics.

The grudge matches pitting the two archrivals against each other has breathed new life into the American Wrestling Association, which has suffered from a continuous raid of their talent pool by both the World Wrestling Federation and the National Wrestling Alliance in recent years. The titanic struggle between the A.W.A. World champion and the Americas champion may very well secure a bright future for the established,Mid-West promotion. Only time will tell.

ELIZABETH VS. SHERRY: WHO'S SEXIER— YOU DECIDE!

Here's a battle that's been going on outside of the ring! Fans seem to be split right down the middle as to who is the undisputed "heartthrob of the W.W.F.". We've decided that the best way to end all of the fuss is by putting it to a vote.

Send in your ballot (please vote only once), and we'll print the results in an upcoming issue of GOLD BELT WRESTLING.

official voting ballot

Send to:

Survey
P.O. Box 1917—Murray Hill Station
New York, NY 10056

check ONLY one box:

☐ ELIZABETH! Shy, lovely and innocent,she gets my vote for "Heartthrob of the W.W.F."!

☐ SHERRY! This sexy siren of the squared circle is everything a modern woman should be!

name_____

address_____

_____

If you do not wish to use this handy ballot, please send your vote on a plain piece of writing stationery. Thank you.

IS THIS THE LAST HURRAH FOR PIPER, SNUKA & RHODES?

by Michael O'Hara

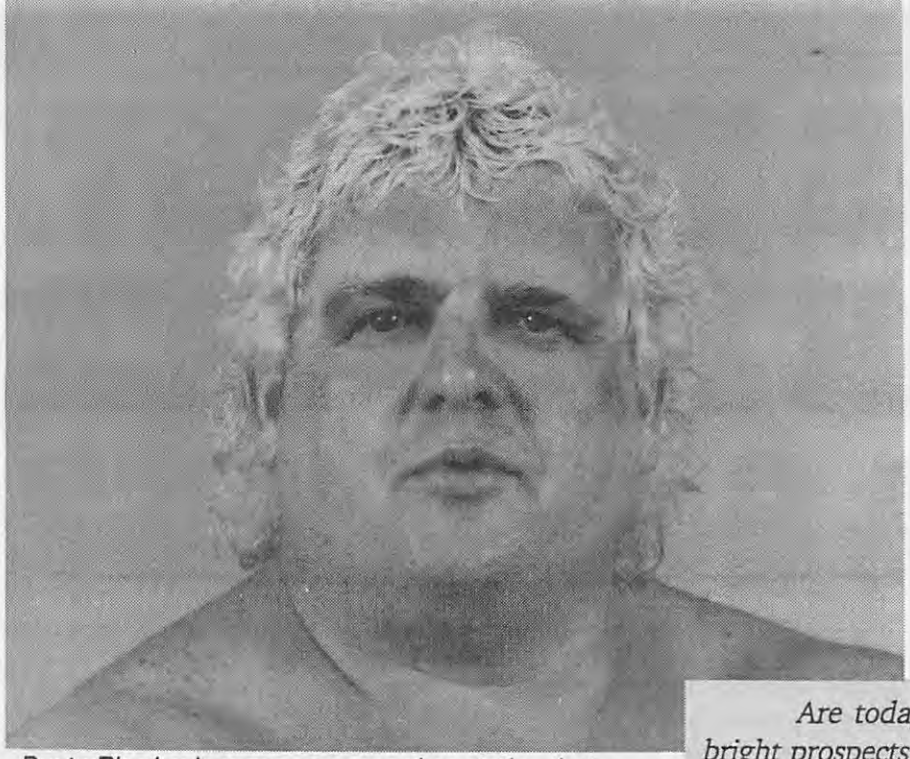
When we think of how successful pro—wrestling became in the 1980's, we can attribute the growth in popularity to a number of two-fisted mat manglers, who are capable of crossing over the invisible boundary that has long separated the grappling game from other sports and entertainment forms. They were the men that won the hearts of American audiences from coast-to-coast with their outrageous squared circle antics. They showed the rest of the world something that we've known all along, and that is professional wrestling's true commitment to giving the fans two dollars worth of excitement for every dollar spent.

Thanks to the wild antics of "the American Dream", "the Superfly" and "the Rowdy One", professional wrestling experienced its greatest heights in the mid-1980's. Do these three mat legends still have what it takes to propel the grappling game to even loftier recognition?

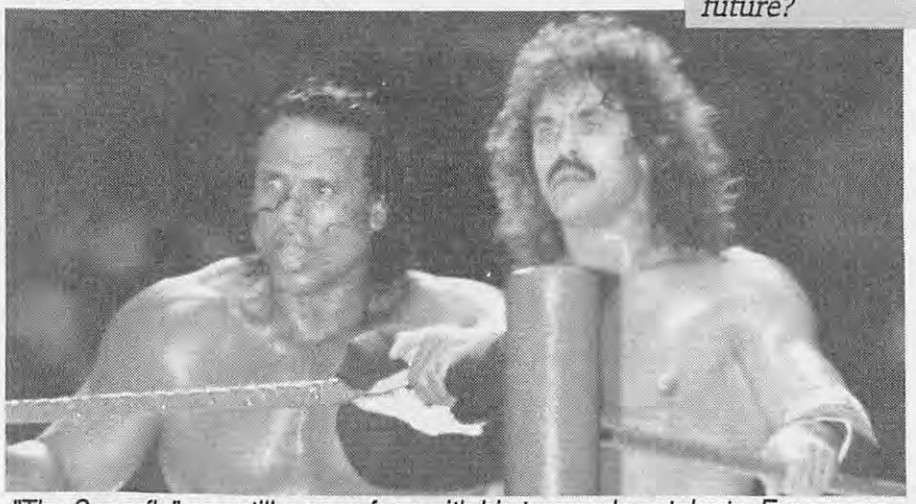
Now that we are taking our first few steps in this brand new decade, it comes as quite a surprise to see that the wrestling profession still depends on these same men to carry the torch of publicity into the dark, unknown caverns of the 1990's. While few can deny the success and unparalleled popularity of Dusty Rhodes, Roddy Piper and Jimmy Snuka in the 1980's, one has to ask if they still have what it takes to compete with the youngsters of the 1990's?

Despite movie success and color commentary work, Roddy can't seem to get one-on-one mat combat out of his system! Photo: M. Rodgers

Dusty's invasion of the W.W.F. at the tail end of 1989 was a complete surprise to one and all. After leaving the confines of the N.W.A. to begin his Pro-Wrestling Federation in Florida, "the Dream" stated that he planned on leaving the dance with the song that brought him in, which meant that he returned to Florida to end his career



Dusty Rhodes has gone on record as stating that this year is his last roundup.



"The Superfly" can still amaze fans with his tremendous talents. Even more amazing is the fact that he's defeating men half his age! Photo: Matt DeLuca

because it was the same location to have launched it close to twenty years ago.

To his credit, Rhodes has pinned some pretty heavy dudes since entering the W.W.F. including the Honky Tonk Man, Ted DiBiase and Akeem, so there is still plenty of fire in the man's heart, however, will Dusty's huge ego prevent him from knowing when it's time to hang it all up.

Needless to say, Rhodes has been a longtime rival of the W.W.F. and his position at present leaves him in a very vulnerable state as he no doubt is viewed by many disgruntled former N.W.A. stars currently competing in the Federation as a target. Without the support of the promotion's executive officers, will Tully, Arn, the Warlord and the Barbarian among others,seek revenge?

Despite movie success, color commentary work and personal appearances, "Rowdy" Roddy Piper just can't get mat combat out of his system. While many of Piper's initial motion pictures were nothing to write home about, the kilt-clad wildman finally made inroads with "They Live", a sci-fi epic which saw Piper "come of age" in Hollywood.

Why would "Hot Rod" forsake all of that hard work to return to grunt 'n' groan W.W.F. wrestling? Rumors continue to circulate that a second W.W.F. wrestling movie is "in treatment" and will star "Rowdy" Rod, which will sit none too well with the Hulkster as he is probably not too happy with the only other grappler in the Federation who has as much support as him returning to active competition.

Is Piper back in the spotlight merely to capitalize on a W.W.F. movie deal or is his purpose to steal the Hulk's thunder? Only time will tell.

Are today's established stars keeping the bright prospects of tomorrow out of the spotlight and in doing so, are they hurting wrestling's future?

After the harsh divorce of Jimmy "Superfly" Snuka and the World Wrestling Federation back in the mid-1980's, few could have ever hoped to see the high flying Fiji Island superstar defeating opponent after opponent in contests sanctioned by Titan Sports. The only thing that you can ever expect in the wrestling business is the unexpected and Snuka's return certainly tops the list!

"The Superfly", now in his mid-to-late 40's still strikes an imposing figure as he struts down the isle to demolish yet another hapless foe. The charismatic island star is quickly whipping himself back into shape and shows signs of his glory days with every flying body press from the top rope.

Three of wrestling's greatest heroes continue to thrill and inspire us with their impressive talents. But with each victory, comes the realization that retirement is waiting for them somewhere in the not too distant future. Let's hope they go out the way they came in... in a burst of glory!

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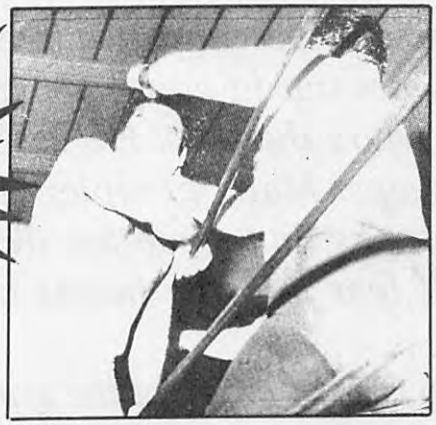

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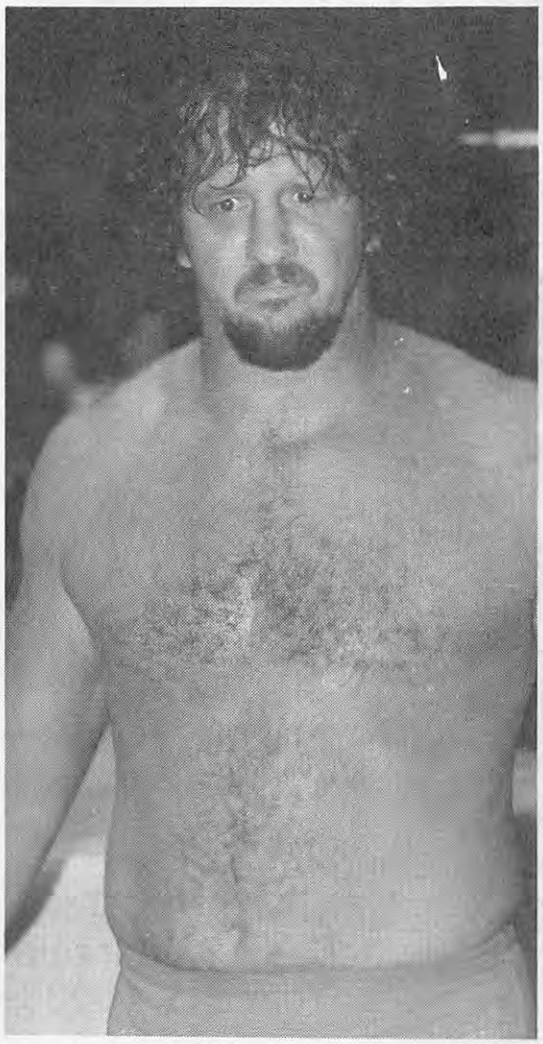
THE TEN MAT MAULERS OTHER WRESTLERS FEAR MOST!

compiled by the COMBAT SPORTS newsletter

A "shooter" is jargon used within the wrestling business to describe a squared circle competitor who goes out in every match to show his opponent who's the boss. He 's a wrestler who plays for keeps. Many grapplers perform using this philosophy, but some are determined that they instill fear into the hearts of their fellow mat men.

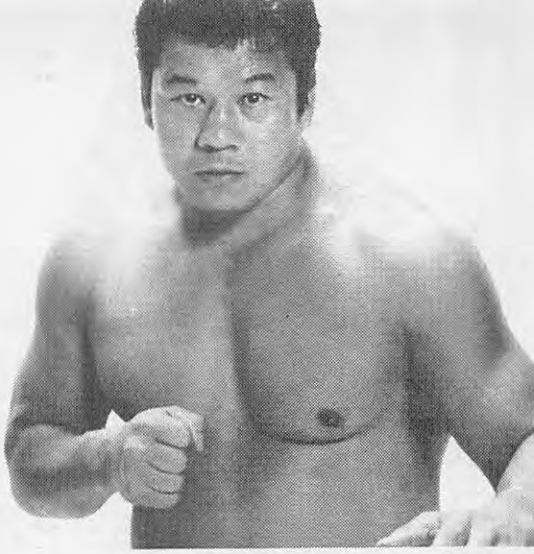
Here is a list of ten of the grappling game's most dangerous men as chosen anonymously by a number of top wrestling stars!

TERRY GORDY—Anyone who doesn't believe Gordy's mention on this list must have never seen him wrestle. Beginning his career at the age of 16 using the name of Terry Mecca, Gordy has developed a reputation as a man who plays by his own rules. Photo: J. Brown

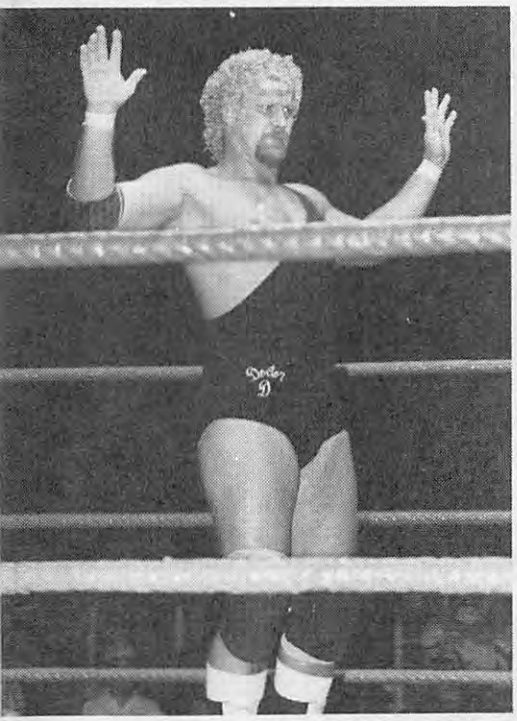


TERRY FUNK besides being a former N.W.A. World heavy -weight champion is recognized throughout North America and Japan as one of the wildest Texans to have ever laced up a pair of boots. Funk's fists are considered real lethal weapons by every foe who has had the misfortune of receiving "a shiner" from the crazed competitor. Photo: Howard Baum

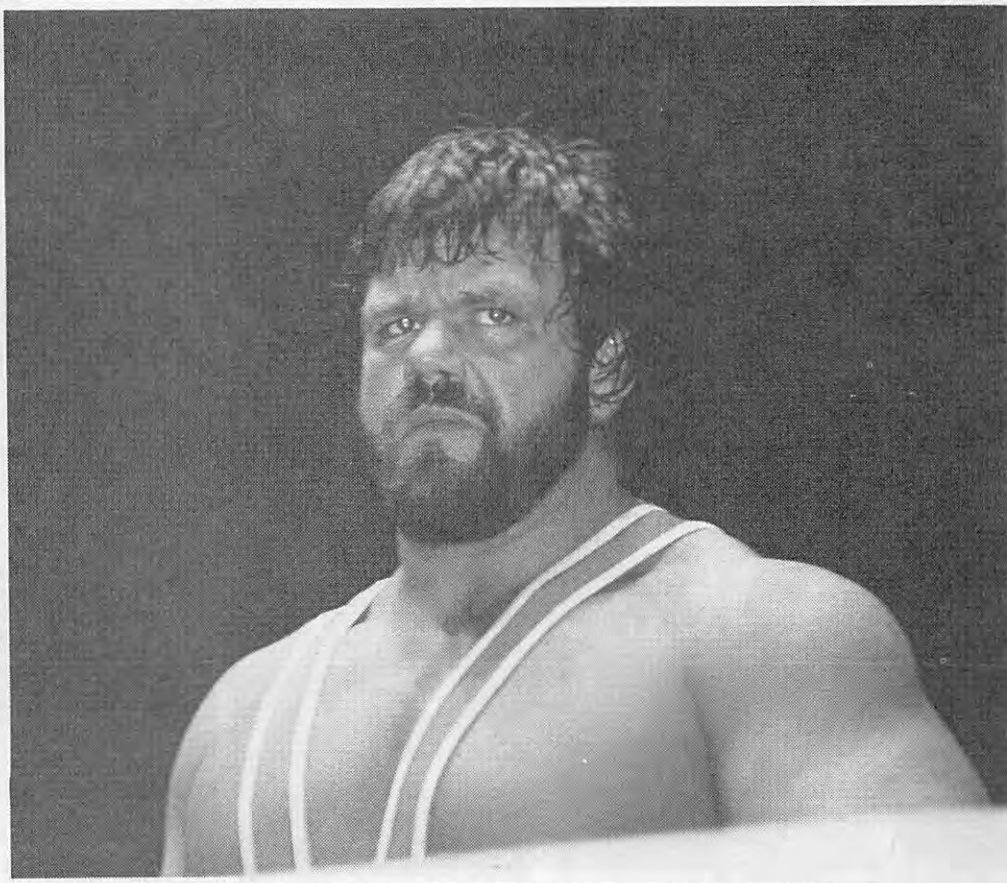
TOM BILLINGTON, who is better known as the Dynamite Kid is a compressed neutron bomb that explodes all over his opponents whenever the spirit moves him. Combining amazing strength, mind-boggling speed, superior technical mat skills and a very short fuse to his temper and you can see why they call him "dynamite".



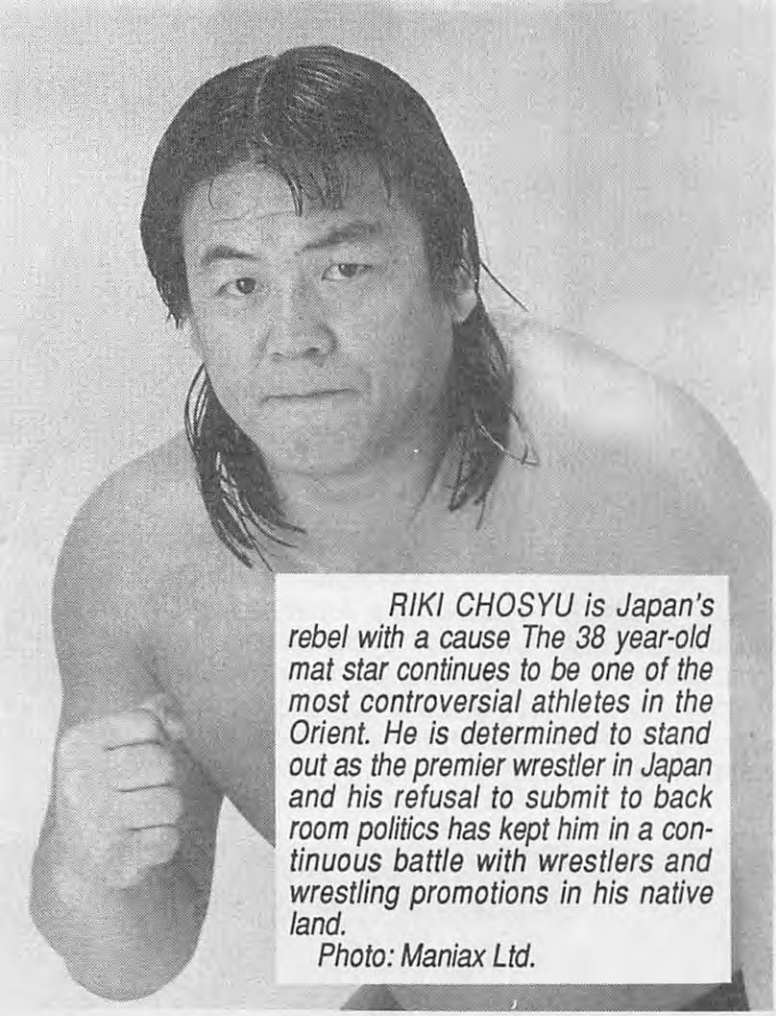
TATSUMI FUJINAMI has learned his lessons well from Japanese legend Antonio Inoki and German mat great Karl Gotch. the 36 year-old powerhouse is considered by many to be one of the most driven competitors in the business. Photo: Maniax Ltd.



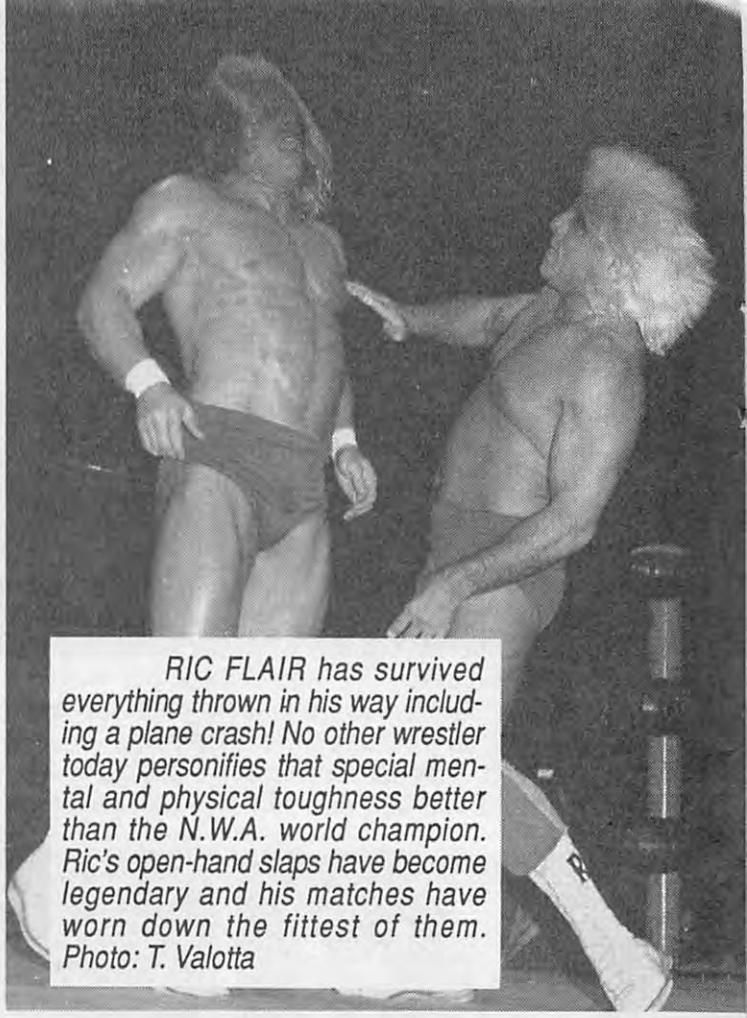
DR. D DAVID SHULTS is a man who does what he wants, when he wants. In the ring he is a mean s.o.b.when he wants to be and he always wants to be! As if wrestling action isn't enough for this Tennessee roughhouser, "Doc" has also become a very capable bounty hunter based in Connecticut. Photo: Connie Cook



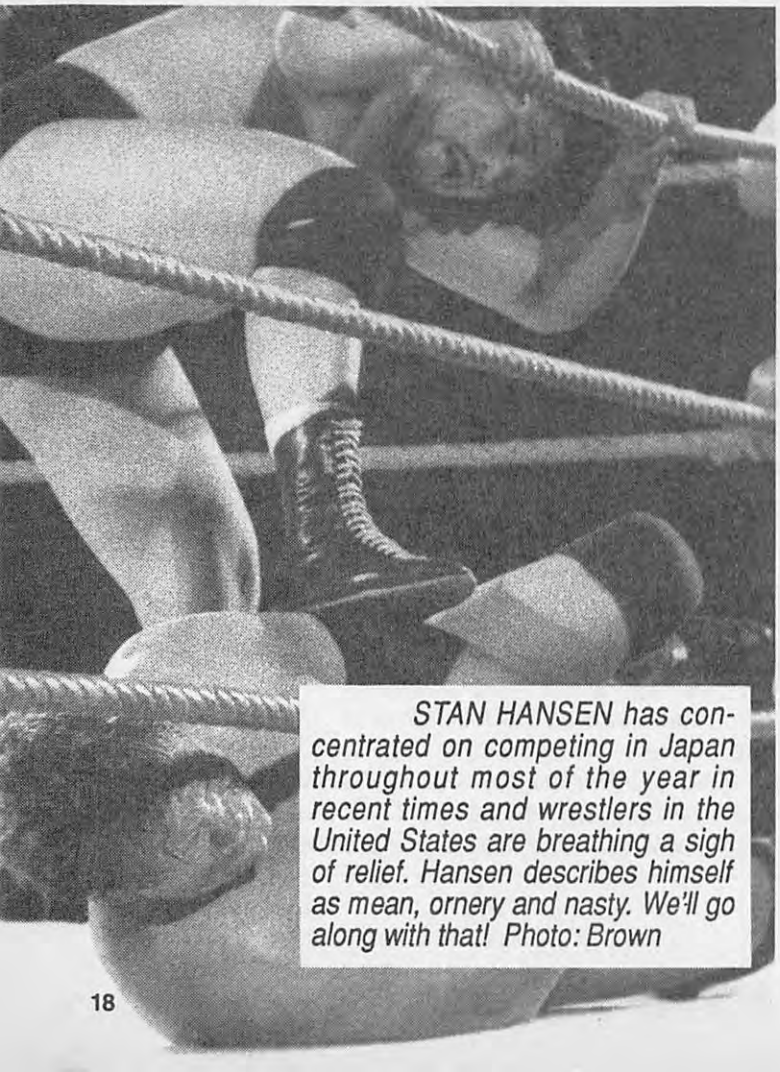
STEVE WILLIAMS earned the nickname of "Dr. Death" as an amateur when a broken nose forced him to wear a face protector while competing. The Oklahoma superstar has shown no mercy in the ring and a few are foolhardy enough to think that they can outclass him in strength or wrestling. Photo: David Lockwood



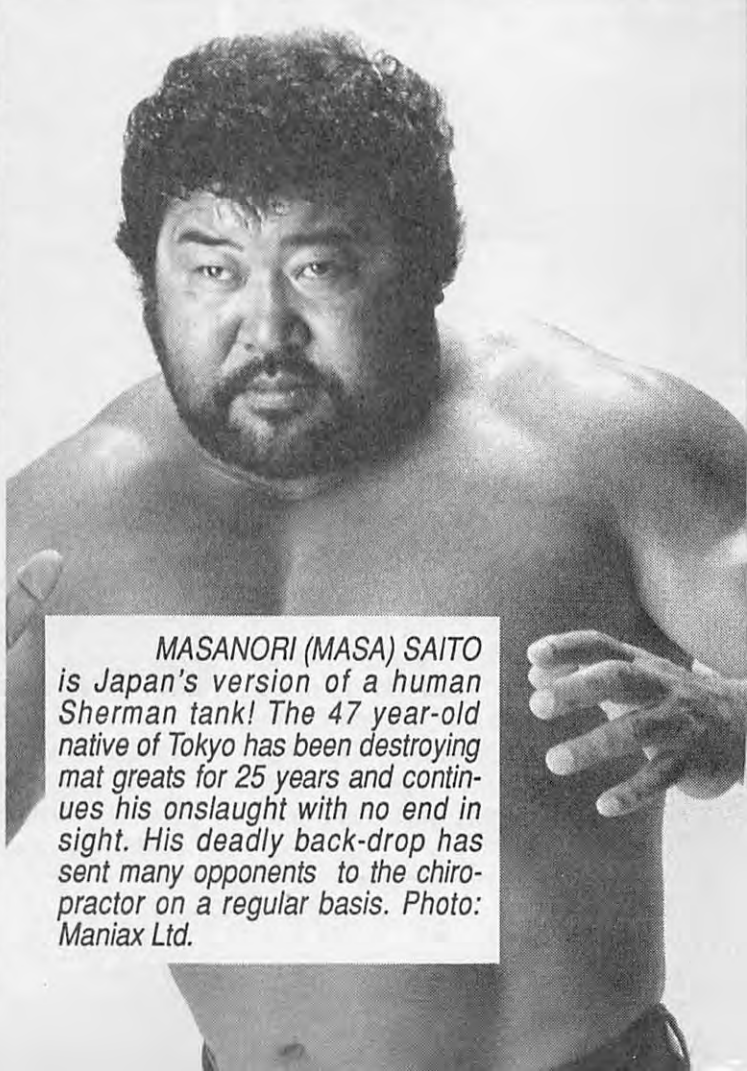
RIKI CHOSYU is Japan's rebel with a cause The 38 year-old mat star continues to be one of the most controversial athletes in the Orient. He is determined to stand out as the premier wrestler in Japan and his refusal to submit to back room politics has kept him in a continuous battle with wrestlers and wrestling promotions in his native land.
Photo: Maniax Ltd.



RIC FLAIR has survived everything thrown in his way including a plane crash! No other wrestler today personifies that special mental and physical toughness better than the N.W.A. world champion. Ric's open-hand slaps have become legendary and his matches have worn down the fittest of them. Photo: T. Valotta



STAN HANSEN has concentrated on competing in Japan throughout most of the year in recent times and wrestlers in the United States are breathing a sigh of relief. Hansen describes himself as mean, ornery and nasty. We'll go along with that! Photo: Brown



MASANORI (MASA) SAITO is Japan's version of a human Sherman tank! The 47 year-old native of Tokyo has been destroying mat greats for 25 years and continues his onslaught with no end in sight. His deadly back-drop has sent many opponents to the chiropractor on a regular basis. Photo: Maniax Ltd.

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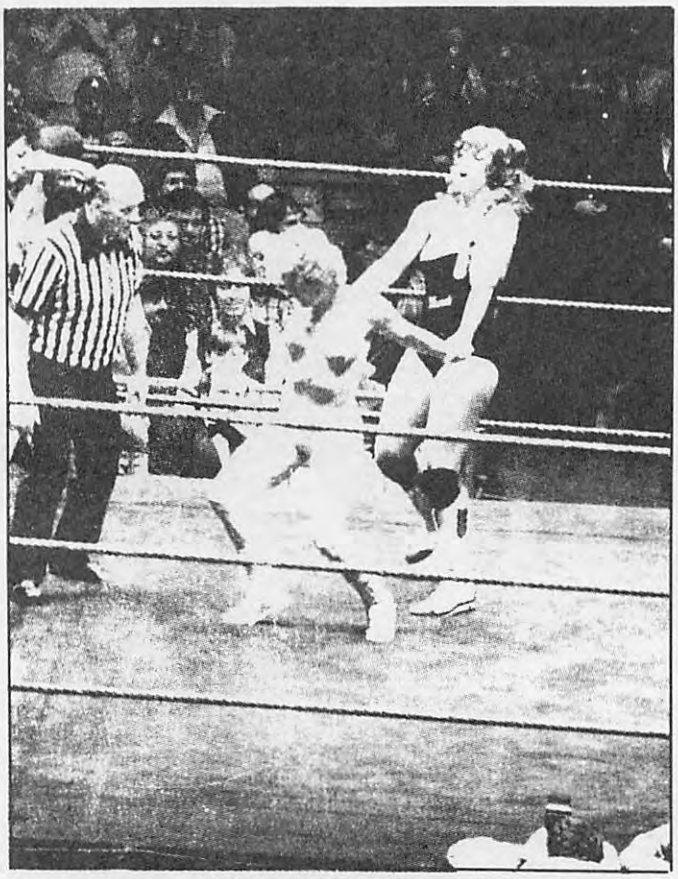

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THE COMBAT SPORTS wrestling grab bag is chock—full of action! Only $9.50 (postage included).

Pete Lederberg, 3195 Foxcroft Road (F316), Miramar, FL 33025 offers a dynamite photo list featuring all wrestling faves—send $1.00 today!

Harvey Cobb, 2619 Ruffin Way, Norfolk, VA 23504 is at the helm of the Pro—Wrestling Enquirer, a late breaking news zine that sells for $2.00 per issue.

Bob Miller, P.O. 951,Humble, TX 77347 offers his free photo list (send a s.a.s.e.) and a monthly 4—page publication titled Texas Wrestling News which sells for $2.00 per issue.

Mike Rodgers, 613 NE 178th, Portland, OR 97230 publishes Ring Around the Northwest for only .50¢ an issue. A great zine at a great price!

Jim Dough, 6024 Cipriano Road, Lanham, MD 20706 publishes the weekly Wrestling Style newsletter, which sells for .75¢ per issue. Jim is also looking for correspondents.

Combat Sports, P.O Box 651—Gracie Station, NY, NY 10028—0011 has a large selection of VHS video tapes from the United States & Japan that they're willing to trade for LJN WWF wrestling figures (unopened).

Sandy DeLuca, 37 Earlham Way, RI 02886 is interested in starting her own wrestling newsletter and is in need of correspondence.

Combat Sports, P.O Box 651 Gracie Station, NY, NY

10028—0011 is offering a fantastic collection of pro—wrestling videos (VHS format only!). Each tape sells for only $19.95 (+ $1.50 postage and insurance). They are:

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Dave Meltzer, P.O. Box 1228, Campbell, CA 95009—1228 is at the helm of The Wrestling Observer which is a mighty impressive weekly zine presenting news, commentary and fan opinion. This ambitious newsletter is available at four issues for $5.00.

Howard Baum, 333-09 Ives Dairy Road, North Miami Beach, FL 33179 has a superb offering of high quality posed and action pixs of just about every wrestler who has entered the ring in the last 15 years. His amazing list can be yours for only $1.00.

Boyce Johansen, 5424 W. 69th Avenue, Arvada, CO 80003, publishes Wrestle—Gram '89 which sells for .75¢ per issue.

Mark Shaver, P.O. Box 145, Bloominburg, NY 12721 publishes Wrestling Potpourri, which is a 3—page newsreel fanzine—.-75¢ per issue.

Action figures of all your favorite wrestlers are available from COMBAT SPORTS.

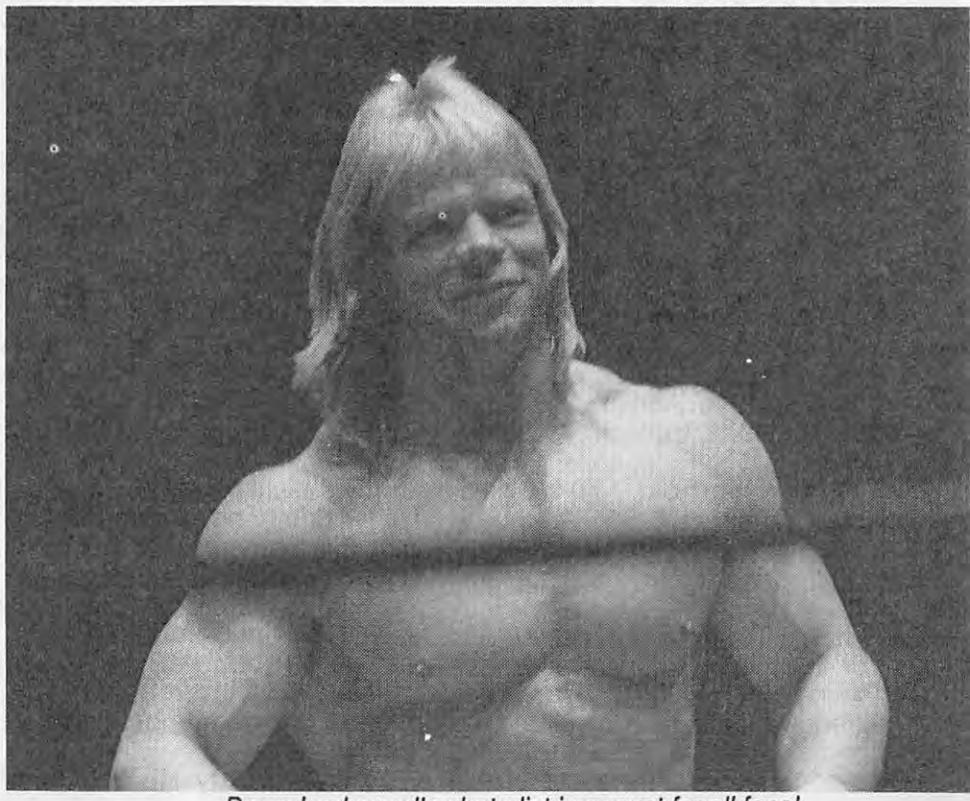
Francesco Castano, 13135 Colton Lane, Gaithersburg, MD 20878 is at the helm of a new bi—monthly titled The Ring Post, a 15—pager filled with news and results for only .50¢.

Roger Levasseur, Jr., 151 B Old Lewiston Road, Topsham, ME 04086 is starting a wrestling bulletin titled Wrestleramble and would like to hear from fans who can provide him with newspaper ads, results and information.

Dawn Lockwood, 354 South Broadway, Pennsville, NJ 08070 has a large listing of wrestling photographs for sale—send .50¢ in stamp or coin.

Karen—Michele Daniels, c/o DVE Photos, 203 Heather Drive, Bryans Road, MD 20616—9612 has hundreds of rassling pixs for sale. Send a self—addressed, stamped envelope for a free list.

Sean Ryan, P.O. Box 142983, Anchorage, AK 99514—2983 is



Dawn Lockwood's photo list is a must for all fans!

in the process of compiling a video tape swapping list and would like to hear from anyone interested in being listed to buy, sell or trade wrestling tapes.

Tom Burke, 31 Groveland Street, Springfield, MA 01108 publishes Global Wrestling, one of the most respected fanzines covering the mat game. Each issue is chock—full of news & views from around the world. Only $1.50 per issue or $21.00 for 12 issues (one year). Tom is also at the helm of All Girl Wrestling, which is devoted entirely to the sensational women wrestlers. If you enjoy the fighting femmes, this one's for you—only $4.00 (+ two first class stamps).

Chris Siggia,1638 W. 32 Street, Erie, PA 16508 publishes Mat Weekly, a three page newsletter covering the latest happenings on the U.S. wrestling scene. Only .75¢ per issue.

Smith & Estep Photography, RT. 7, Box 50, Elizabethton, TN 37643 have photos of all NWA wrestlers for sale. Send a s.a s.e. for more information.

Howard Feintuch, 6218 Greenblade Garth, Columbia, MD 21045 publishes Wrestling which sells for .50¢ per issue and is filled with ratings and regional information.

Chris Croce, 198 Altair Drive, Sewell, NJ, 08080 offers his 24 page photo list of the top stars of wrestling for only .50¢.

Brian Cosgrove, 938 1/2 Indiana Avenue, Glassport, PA 15045 publishes Mat Madness, which sells for $1.00 and is packed with news and views.

J.D. Woodall, 1707 Alabama, Big Spring, TX 79720 publishes The Piledriver, an informative news/results bulletin for only .75¢.

Chris Hemrick, 1704 Shire Court, Wheaton,IL 60187 has an assortment of action, color photos for sale. Send a s.a.s.e. for info.

J.B. Tesoriero, Jr., 184 Yorktowne Court, Washington Township, NJ 07675 has an extensive collection of wrestling photos for sale. Send $1.00 for his complete list.

Jerry Stawls, 617 Meadowbrook Road, Kings Mountain, NC 28086 has several hundred photos of NWA wrestlers, both past and present. Send $1.00 for the complete list.

Rene Ford, P.O. Box 188, NY, NY 10014 is hard at work on the Wrestling Gazette, a fact 'n' fun filled zine selling for $1.25 per issue.

Nancy Sodano, 52 Penn St., Quincy, MA 02169 publishes a great new fanzine titled Wrestling: Off the Record, which sells for only $1.00 for each issue.

Tina Dealwis & Monica Watts, 1 Dean Park Road (apt. 1115), Scarborough, Ontario, Canada M1B 2W5 publishes the Squared Circle of Toronto which is available for $3.00 (outside of Canada—please send money orders in Canadian funds).

Dawnella Polinski, Rt. 2, Box 1178, Crandon, WI 54520 covers the major league promotions in The Ringside Reporter which sells for $2.50 per issue.

Shelton Mitchell, P.O. Box 293, Clawson, MI 48017—0293 publishes The Headlock Reporter covering news and views from the Midwest—only $2.00 (+ .45¢ postage).

Linda Cossey, 1356 Dewey Ave., Rochester, NY 14613 has an assortment of wrestling photos for sale. Send a self—addressed stamped envelope for more information.

Wayne Ermatinger, 11822—78 St., Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5B 2J4 publishes Wrestling Freak, a hilarious look at the mat madness. This fine zine sells for $3.00 in U.S. funds.

Combat Sports, P.O. Box 651—Gracie Station, New York, NY 10028—0011 has been providing wrestling fans with the very best in grappling collectibles since 1976. Send a self—addressed, stamped envelope for their free list of videos, toys & wrestling memorabilia. Here is just a sample of what's available from Combat Sports:

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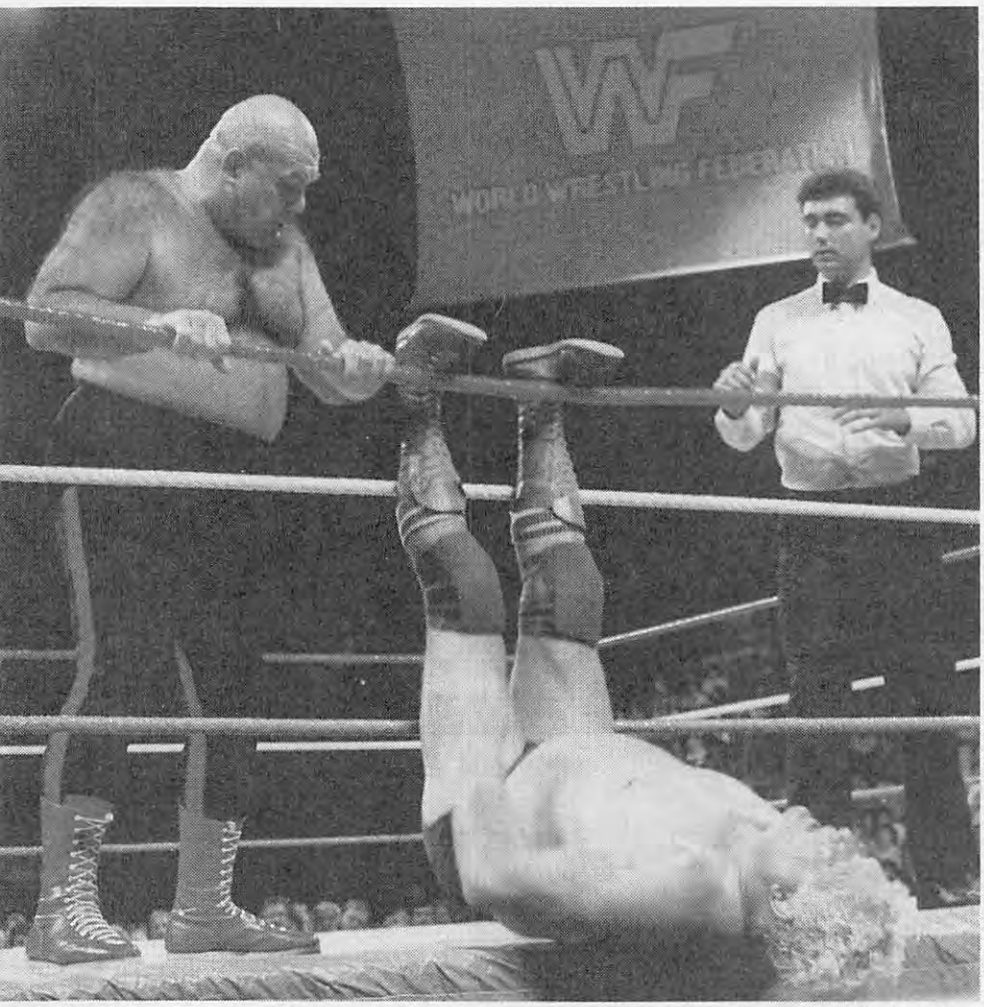
WHAT AWAITS THE W.W.F. IN THE 1990'S?

by Michael O'Hara

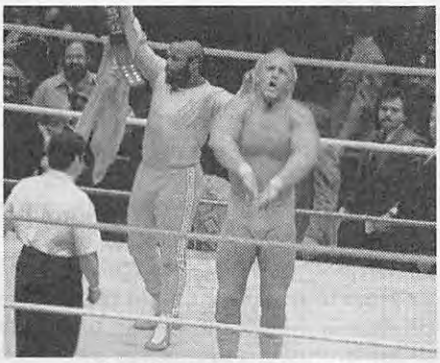
In the 1980's the word wrestling was synonymous with the World Wrestling Federation, which went from being a successful regional wrestling promotion to a multimillion dollar entertainment operation which covers all of the United States and many of the major Canadian markets. Can the W.W.F. retain its competitive edge and continue along its profitable path in the new decade?



Veterans George Steel and Harley Race duked it out much to the delight of W.W.F. fans in the 1980's. The Federation hopes to hold on to its position as the number one wrestling promotion in the United States. Photo: Connie Cook

The 1980's has been a decade owned exclusively by the Wrestling Federation. While many dismiss the wild antics of this highly successful wrestling promotion, one fact remains—through hard work and inventive gimmicks, they have crossed over that invisible fine line which separates fringe entertainment operations from mainstream, conventional ventures.

Pro-wrestling has long been relegated to UHF television stations at odd hours during the day or night and the avid followers of the mat sport were forced to play hide & seek with the stations that continuously changed the time slot in haphazard fashion...after all this was only wrestling.



The Teaming of Mr. T and Hulk Hogan at the very first Wrestlemania, solidified the promotion's ambition to gain acceptance with the mainstream media. Photo: M. O'Hara

Only wrestling indeed, as the grappling game has little if any respect. A wrestling fan was perceived by the public at large as someone who wore his pants under his arm pits and resembled Pee Wee Herman or Ed Grimley. The wrestling fan usually spoke in a low voice of his interest in the grunt 'n' groan

combat and found himself as the butt of jokes when in the company of non-wrestling fans. It was hard being a wrestling fan when wrestling wasn't "cool".

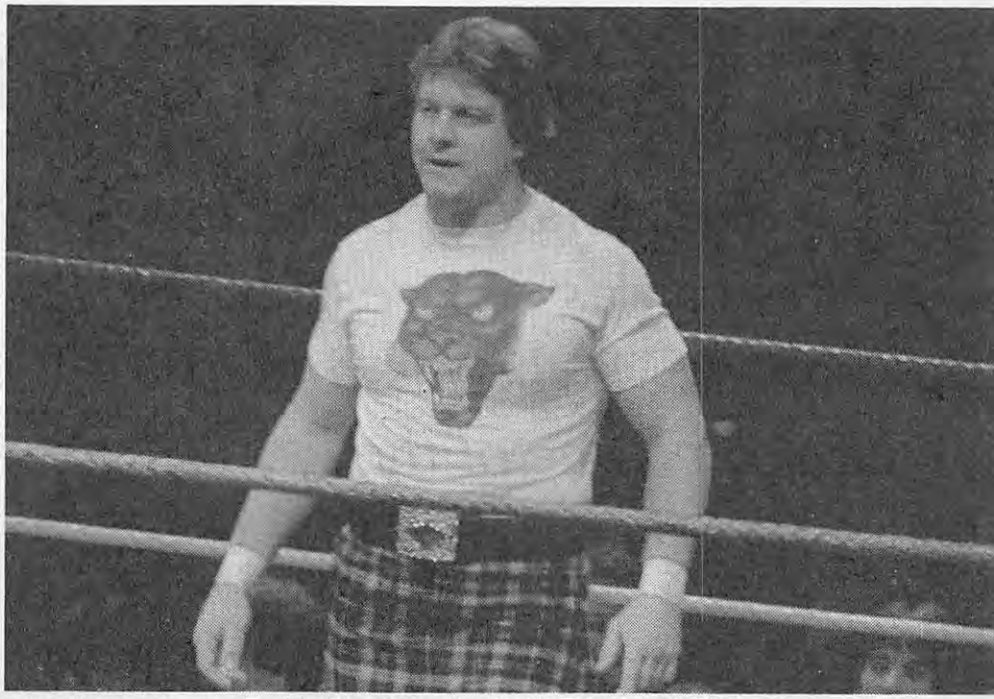
In 1984 things began to happen. Vince McMahon, Jr. took over the reigns of the east coast based World (Wide) Wrestling Federation and changed the very course of the wrestling world. Gone were the days of respecting the territorial claim set down by a handful of wrestling monopolizers.

McMahon raided every U.S. booking office and amassed an impressive array of topnotch wrestlers, managers, announcers and booking agents. The "old school" promoters, refusing to pay higher wages to their top personnel, took the approach that there were plenty of talented people out there to fill the void and in the short-term it succeeded, but after six years of raiding, the once vibrant "old school" promotions teeter on the brink of disaster.

McMahon and the W.W.F. have also had their setbacks. Several insiders have claimed that the promotion has hired every "bank teller" in the area to handle the business of running the operation. Many of the top seated executives with Titan Sports have little, if any, experience with the mat sport and are inclined to go with whatever the boss deems as necessary to continue along the merry path of high profitability.

It might very well be the CEO's, treating the wrestling business as if they were working on the MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour, who will cause the downfall of the top rated Federation. It's not in the best interest of the sport or this particular wrestling promotion, to insulate the basic operation with pretentious personnel,who deep down are embarrassed to even be associated with professional wrestling.

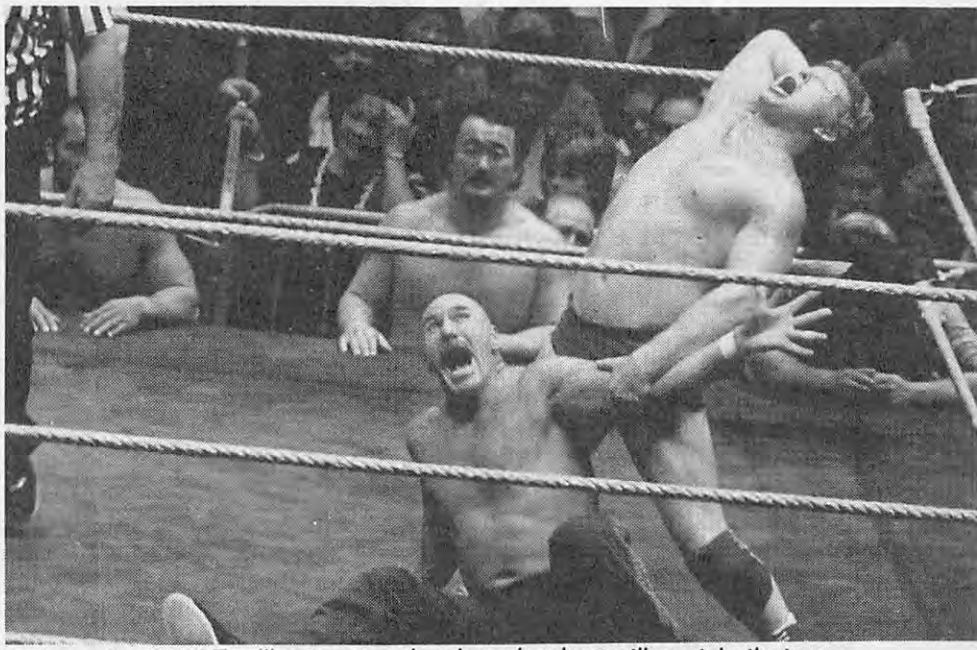
But aside from personnel, demographics and other mundane aspects of running an entertainment venture, comes the all important elements of talent. Are there any wrestlers on the horizon, who are really capable of maintaining a similar popularity level as W.W.F. legends Hogan, Piper, Andre and others?



Are there any new Roddy Piper's on the W.W.F. horizon? O'Hara

After six years on top, the W.W.F. still clings to Hogan as its "ace in the hole", but for how much longer? Surely there must be a wrestler somewhere who can take the torch from the Hulk and continue to run ahead of the pack of rival promotions.

Whoever succeeds Hulk Hogan as W.W.F. champion will have to be a standout performer and my own guess is that he'll be so totally different to the current champion in regards to personality, look and wrestling style that he'll surprise us all! Sometime, in the not—too—distant—future, we'll have our answer.

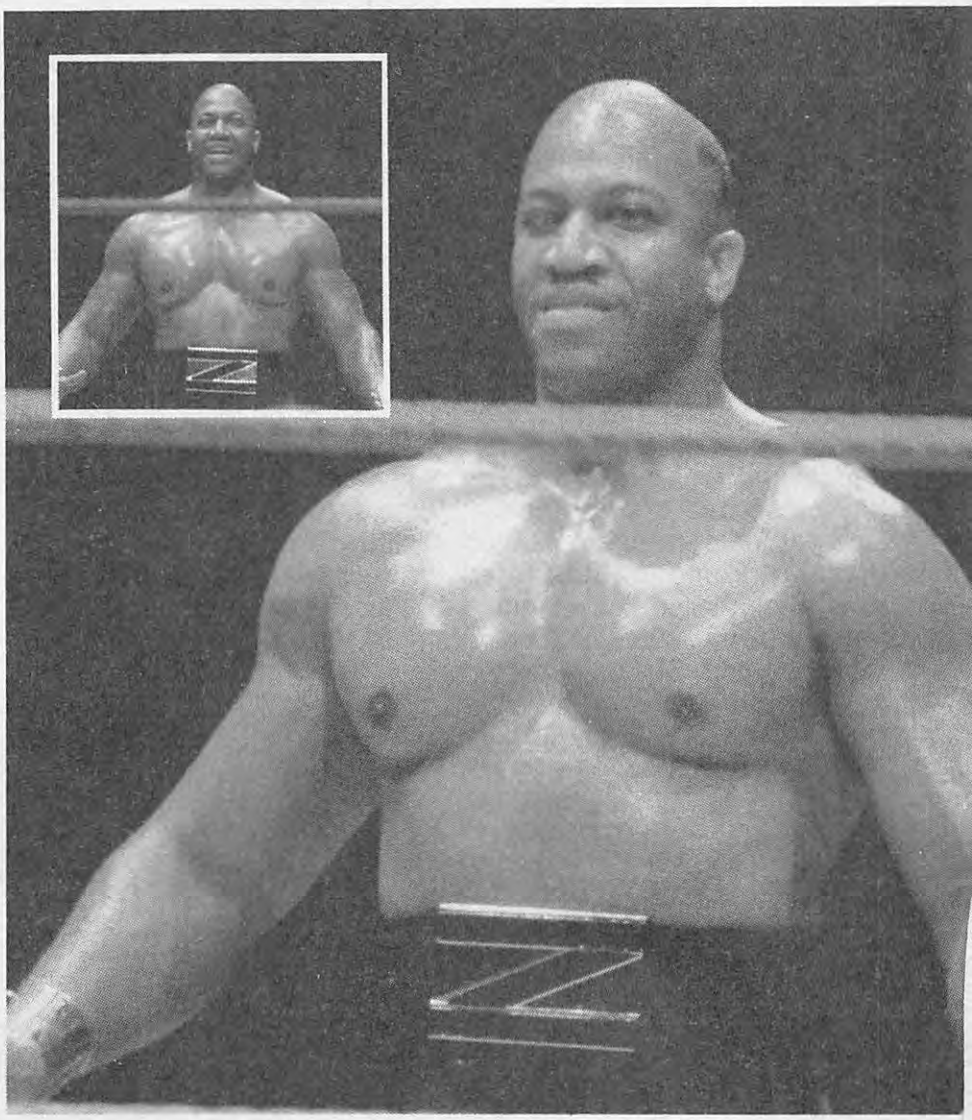


Perhaps the W.W.F. will return to a harder edged wrestling style that was once personified by former champion Bob Backlund. Photo M. O'Hara

ZEUS IS NO WRESTLER!

No one can deny that Zeus is a frightening sight, however as a wrestler, he leaves a lot to be desired. Maybe his role in the W.W.F. has proven him to be one of the world's greatest actors!

photos by
Sandy & Matt
DeLuca



When Tom "Tiny" Lister started out his career as a movie actor, it's doubtful that he had ever thought it would lead him to a spot as a ranked contender for Hulk Hogan's World Wrestling Federation championship, but his screen presence in No Holds Barred so impressed Vince McMahon and the W.W.F. that he was offered a contract.

Looking at the physical package, the Federation saw the potential in this ebony giant. The man is obviously no stranger to a weight room and his background which alleges that he was at one time a bodyguard to such notable stars as Eddie Murphy proves that he can handle himself in a back alley scrap, but can he wrestle?

In preparation for Summer Slam a few months ago, Zeus subjected himself to a "crash course" in W.W.F.-styled wrestling with the help of many accomplished mat masters, who work for the promotion. Many said the same thing—he has potential but it'll take time. He needs to develop his skills against lesser opponents instead of being thrown into a den of lions namely main event wrestling stars.

While Zeus remains an imposing figure, his ring capabilities show him to be inexperienced and outclassed when facing the likes of Hulk Hogan or Brutus Beefcake. Of course his ring attire doesn't help either. I dare anyone to be an effective grappler wearing four-inch heels on their boots, a huge belt with a giant metallic "Z" draped in front and what would be considered less than perfect vision.

Zeus is no wrestler—that's for sure, but he's learning the ropes and picking up the tools of the trade. He might not be able to do much in the ring now, but when he finally knows what he's doing within the squared circle—LOOK OUT!

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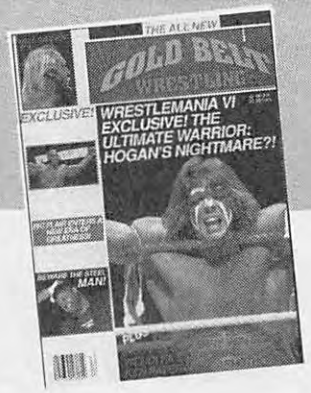

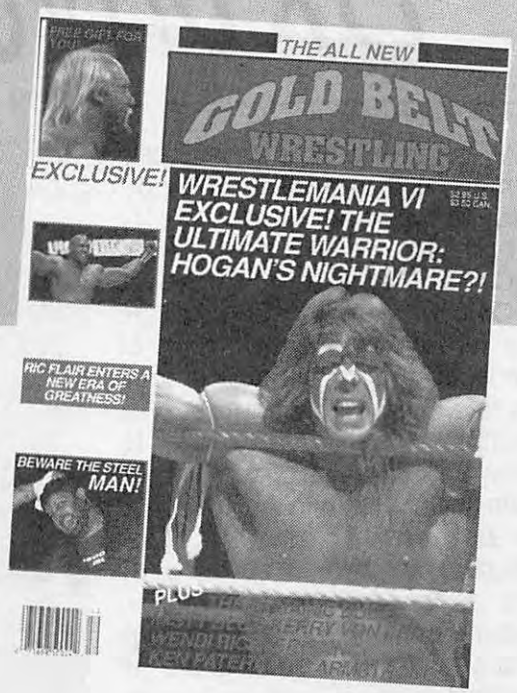

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INTERNATIONAL GOLD BELT FOCUS ON BRUNO BEKKAR

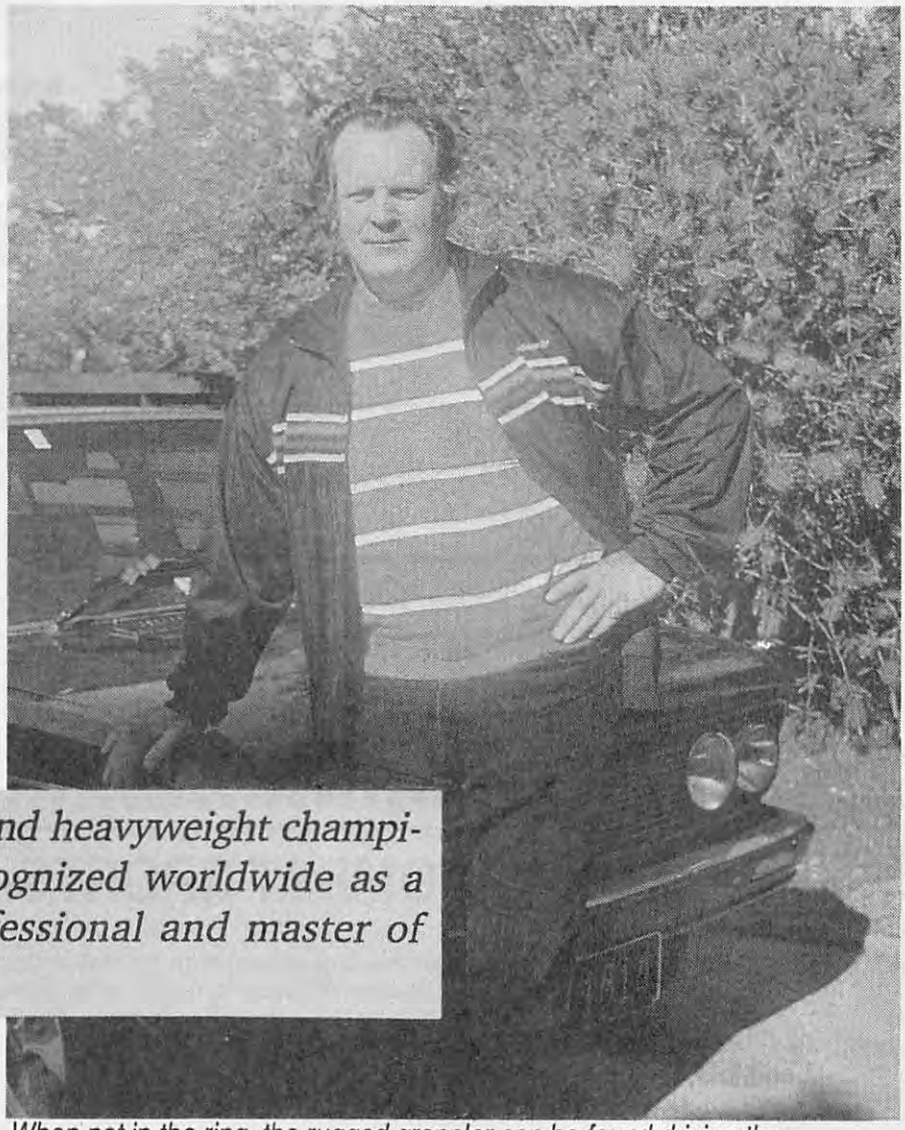
photos & text Dave Cameron

New Zealand has produced some great wrestling champions—among them, Lofty Blomfield, Ken Kenneth, Pat O'Connor and John DaSilvia. O'Connor went on to become the heavyweight champion of the world, but the man who took his talents to most countries was Bruno Bekkar, better known to his workmates as Bryan Ashby.

Raised on a farm in Auroa under Mt Egmont in Taranaki, New Zealand, Bryan started his early life as a chronic asthmatic, heavily dependent on injections and pills. At the age of eight, he learned to swim and do breathing exercises, then a friend of the family, a boxing coach, took Bryan in hand and taught him a thing or two.

At the age of 12, Bryan won Taranaki titles for swimming and represented the province in 1958—1959. Once again, he was experiencing breathing problems and a doctor advised him to try weight-training to expand his pigeon chest.

Former New Zealand heavyweight champion Bruno Bekkar is recognized worldwide as a vastly experienced professional and master of every hold in the book.



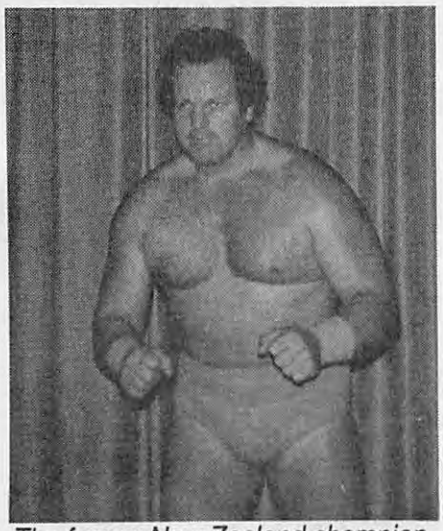
When not in the ring, the rugged grappler can be found driving the back roads of New Zealand.

The weight program worked and transformed the former sickly kid into the 1961 Mr. West Coast body building champion at the event held in New Plymouth. Also at that time, he was involved in amateur wrestling under the watchful eye of Leo Park, who ran the local gym.

When the Ashby family left the farm and moved to New Plymouth, Bryan joined the city gym. He trained hard and started to win his battle against asthma. Even so, when he showed an interest in learning the techniques of professional wrestling, no one wanted to teach him because of his ailment. Bryan promptly packed his bags and headed for Wellington to learn the trade.

Al Hobman, who was Mr. New Zealand and a talented wrestler, took him under his wing and taught the rookie all the break falls, holds and counter-holds. Bryan then gained experience by taking on all comers at local

side shows.
In 1965 he landed his first big break, when Braka Cortez invited him for a tour of Australia. The short tour eventually stretched into ten years which saw Bryan take on the very best wrestlers from "Down Under" as well as American mat stars, who toured the region.
He worked for the famous American promoter, James Barnett, who arranged bouts in Australia, Singapore and Hong Kong, against some competitors as "Killer" Kowalski, Dominic Denucci, Dick Steinborn, Tex McKenzie and Pat O'Connor,

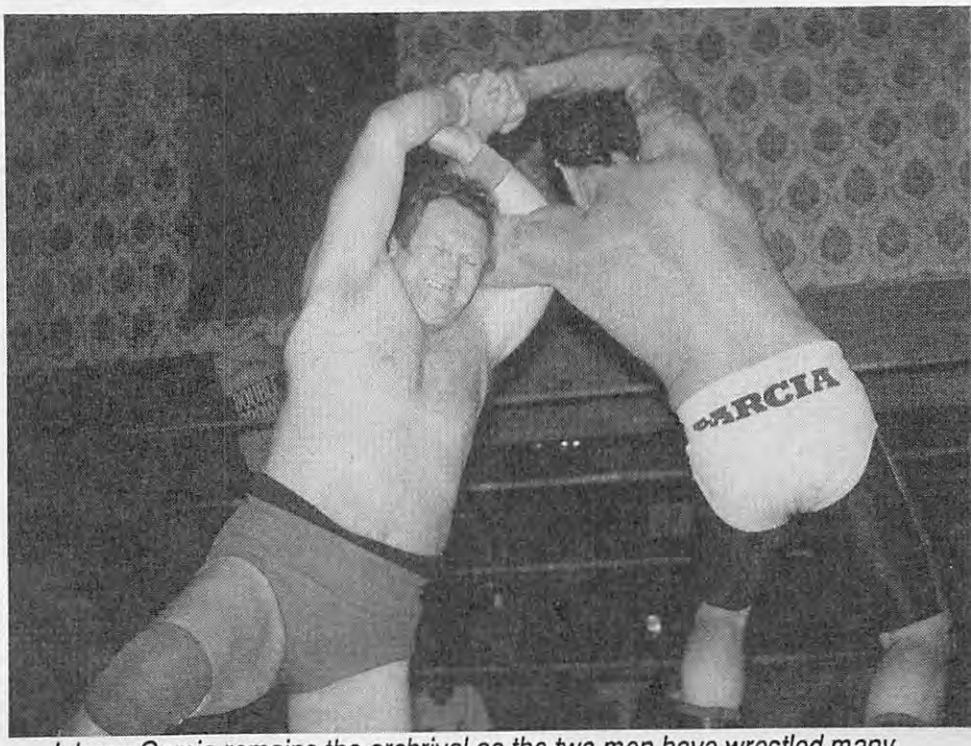

The former New Zealand champion is ready for all comers!

who at one time held the Australian tag team championship with Bryan.
After his successful stint in Australia, he was invited to compete in Japan, where he met British Commonwealth champion, Tony Charles, who introduced Bryan to the British style of wrestling. From Japan the talented New Zealander took his skills to Singapore, Bangkok, Malaysia, the Pacific Islands and Port Moresby.
On returning to New Zealand, he enjoyed the height of success by defeating "Big" John DaSilvia in his town territory of Hawera for the New Zealand heavyweight championship and topped off that win by upsetting Frank Lipanovick in Auckland for

By hook or crook, Bruno (Bryan) gets the job done.

the Australian championship.
Two years later in Sydney, he pinned Les Thorton of Manchester, England for the Commonwealth crown. Thorton, as many of you will recall, held the N.W.A. World junior heavyweight championship for a number of years.
In 1979, on Bryan's third trip to

As a child, Bryan suffered chronic asthma, and on the advice of his doctor, he took up weight lifting as therapy. That therapy led to his illustrious career which is traced here from childhood to the championship!



Johnny Garcia remains the archrival as the two men have wrestled many times over the past several years.

Johnny Garcia is ready to give Bryan another crack at the New Zealand heavyweight crown.

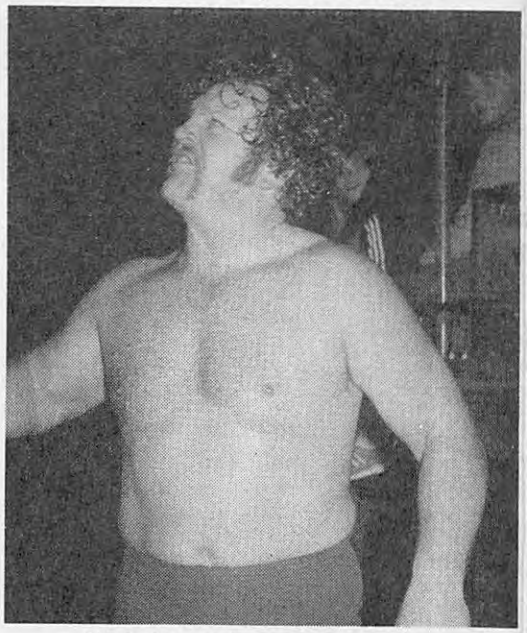
Japan,he met the legendary Al Costello, who was looking for a suitable replacement for his partner Don Kent, who decided upon a solo career at that time. Costello liked what he saw in Bryan and the "new" Kangaroos were born!

Using Puerto Rico as their base of operations, the Kangaroos also traveled to Antigua, Trinidad, Tobago, Santo Domingo,Barbados, Jamaica, San Dominico and Southern regions of the United States.

The Fabulous Kangaroos defeated the famed brother combination of Jack and Jerry Brisco for the North American tag team titles—but then disaster struck! During a bout in Jamaica, one of Bryan's opponents came from behind and hooked the New Zealander's leg into the ropes. The leg was badly broken, and Bryan was packed off for hospital and home.

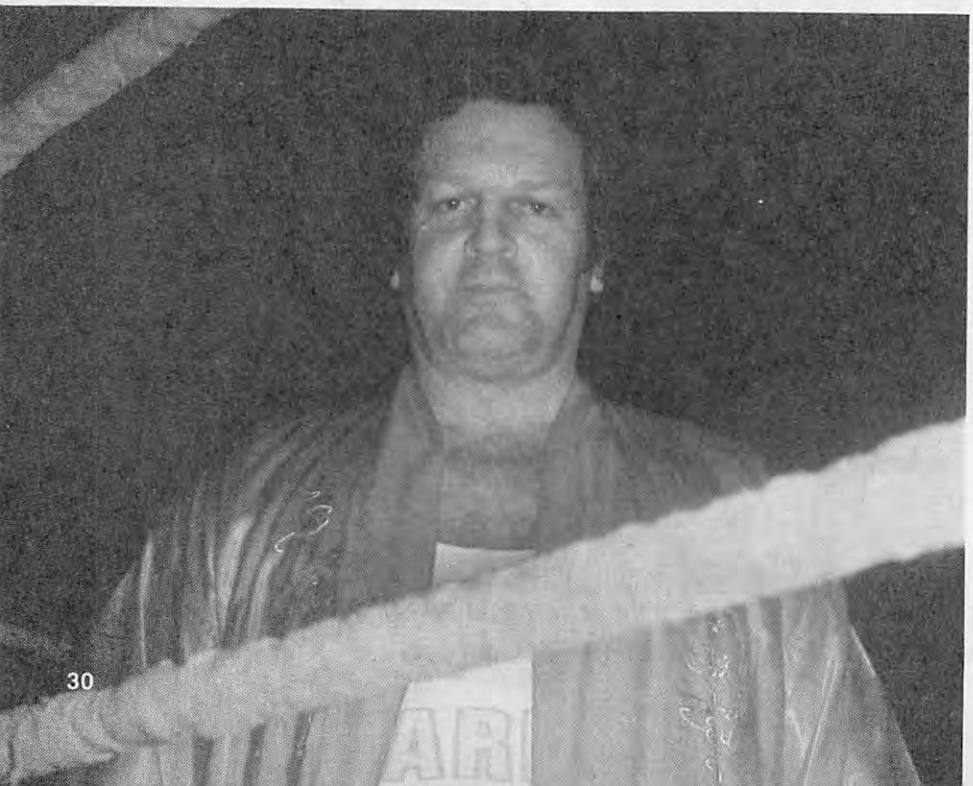
He made a comeback a short while later by defeating Gary Morgan for the New Zealand championship and held the strap for a number of years before recently losing the belt in a controversial match with another popular local, Johnny Garcia, the younger brother of Tony Garea, who was a longtime mainstay in the W.W.F. in America.

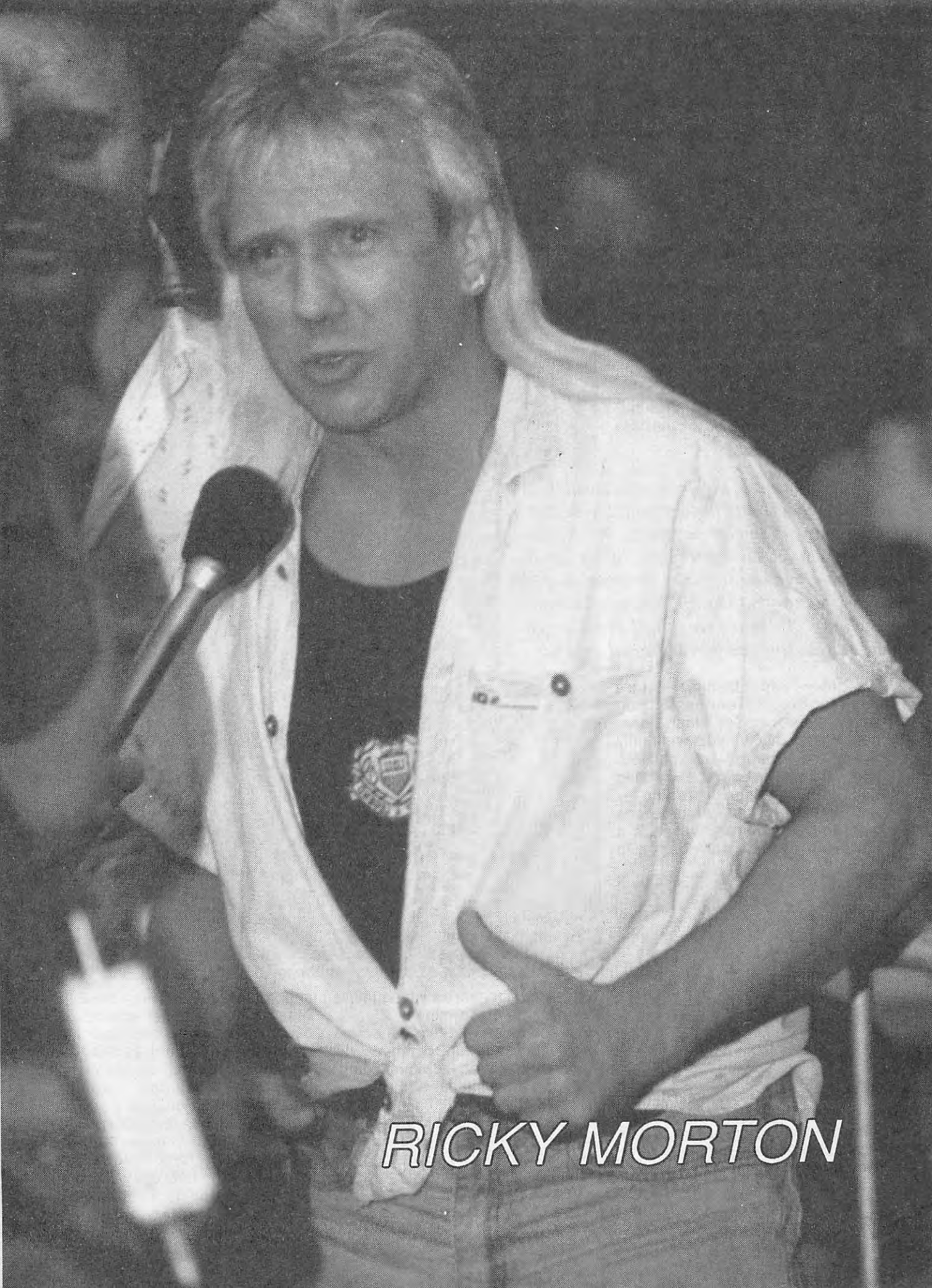
The crafty mat master has faced the very best in international competition and looks to the future for even greater victories!



With New Zealand wrestling on the rise in popularity, you can be sure that this rule-breaking superstar will be a big part of the region's mat scene.

Professional wrestling's popularity is on the upswing in New Zealand, thanks in great part to the American wrestling television shows that are not sent overseas. The region's ranks are starting to swell with local talent including Tama Sasa, Merv Fortune and on the top of that list is Bryan Ashby, better known as Bruno Bekkar!



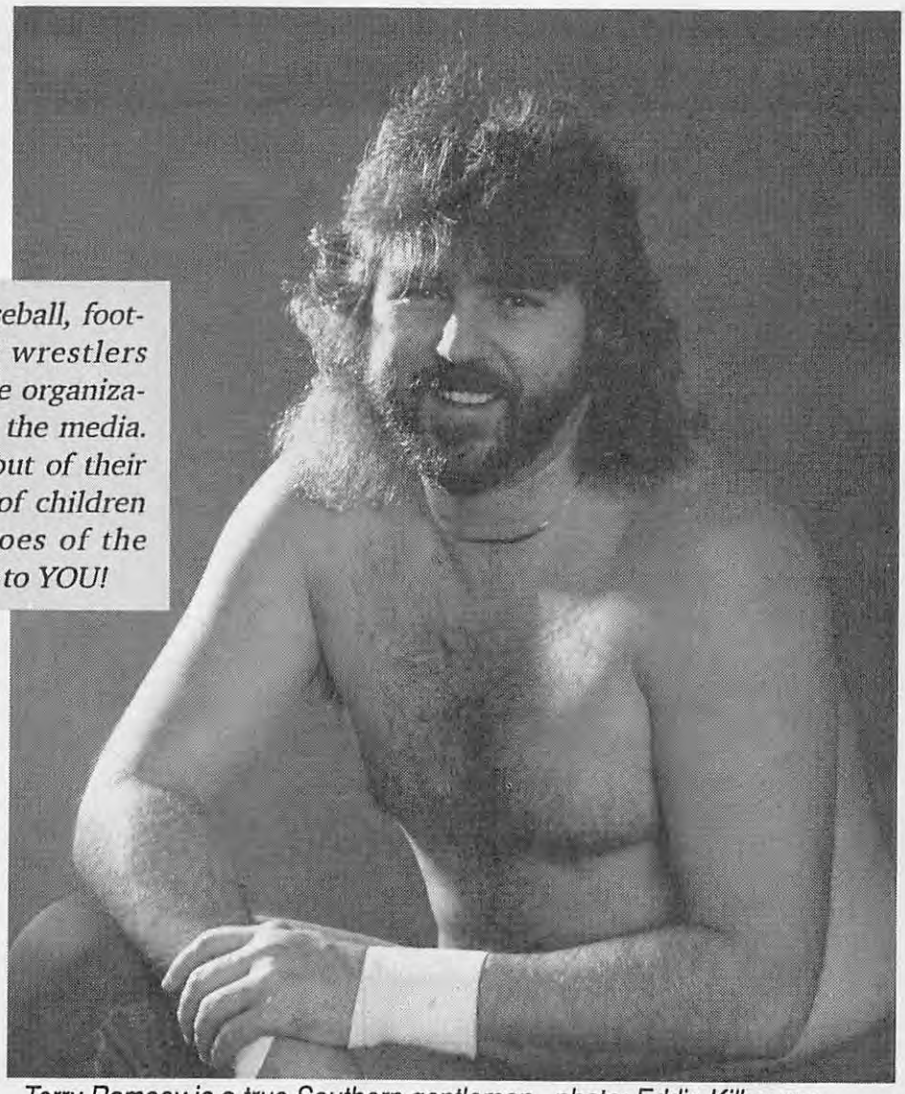

RICKY MORTON

Wrestling's Real Good Guys!

by Dyane Kirkland

Wrestlers and charity work are a tag team that have worked together for quite sometime without the fanfare of the media. Many mat greats continuously give of themselves to a variety of needy causes. This article is not even the tip of the iceberg!

Unlike athletes involved in baseball, football and basketball, professional wrestlers involvement with important charitable organizations goes virtually without notice by the media. Without any fanfare they take time out of their hurried lives to gladden the hearts of children everywhere. To those unsung heroes of the squared circle, this article is dedicated to YOU!



Terry Ramsey is a true Southern gentleman. photo: Eddie Kilbourne

Little Todd Decker, from Jonesborough, Tennessee and seven—year old Sgt. Noah Falin, from Weber City, Virginia were only two of the "Dream-Work" children that were able to attend a wrestling match fund—raiser presented by the UWA—Wrestling. All proceeds went to "Dream-Work" which is a nonprofit organization based in Kingsport, Tennessee which fulfills the dreams of "terminally ill" children and those with "life—threatening" illnesses. "Dream-Work" depends solely on individual contributions also volunteer and community support.

"Sgt." Noah Falin enjoyed all the ringside match action at the recent charity event and adds Terry Ramsey's autograph to his ever growing collection. photo: Del Rector

When the idea for this fund—raiser was presented to Bud Adams, the president of UWA-Wrestling, he began asking the wrestlers if they would like to participate, and the response was tremendous. Bud and volunteers Joe Herron, Billie Jessee, Abby Booher and others, began lining up the mat stars. The matches were held at Sullivan North High School on March 11. Wrestlers included: Johnny Meadows, Bo Elliott, Billy Cody, Jr., Ronnie Bledsoe, Terry Garvin, the Midgets: Butch Cassidy and the Little Mauler, Tony Peters, Don Wright, Keith Hart, Joey Cazana, Tony Page, Jeff Tankersley, Hoot Gibson, Frankie Kegley, the Wild

The world famous Spoilers are as mean as they come in regards to mat warfare, but when it comes to charity work, they're a couple of good eggs. photo: Eddie Kilbourne

"Sgt." Noah cheers for his favorite U.W.A. wrestlers. photo: Del Rector

Samoans #1 & #2, managed by Izzy Slapawitz, Dede Rivers, the Billion Dollar Baby, Thad Clark, John Studd with Mad Jack. The referee was Garner Lane and the ring announcer was Joe Herron, both from the Kingsport area.

"Dream-Work" also had a hand in giving a young girl the tag—team meeting of her young life. Seven year old Kelly Kiser of Greenville, Tennessee, suffers from a rare disease that affects the heart, lungs and respiratory. In fact, she is the youngest known case in the United States. The name of the disease, hyperosinophilic syndrome, is very nearly bigger than Kelly herself. Before taking a turn for the worse a

U.W.A. Wrestling Promotions brought smiles to the faces of many youngsters in attendance at Sullivan North High School's charity wrestling event in which the proceeds went to "Dream Works", a nonprofit organization based in Kingsport, Tennessee.

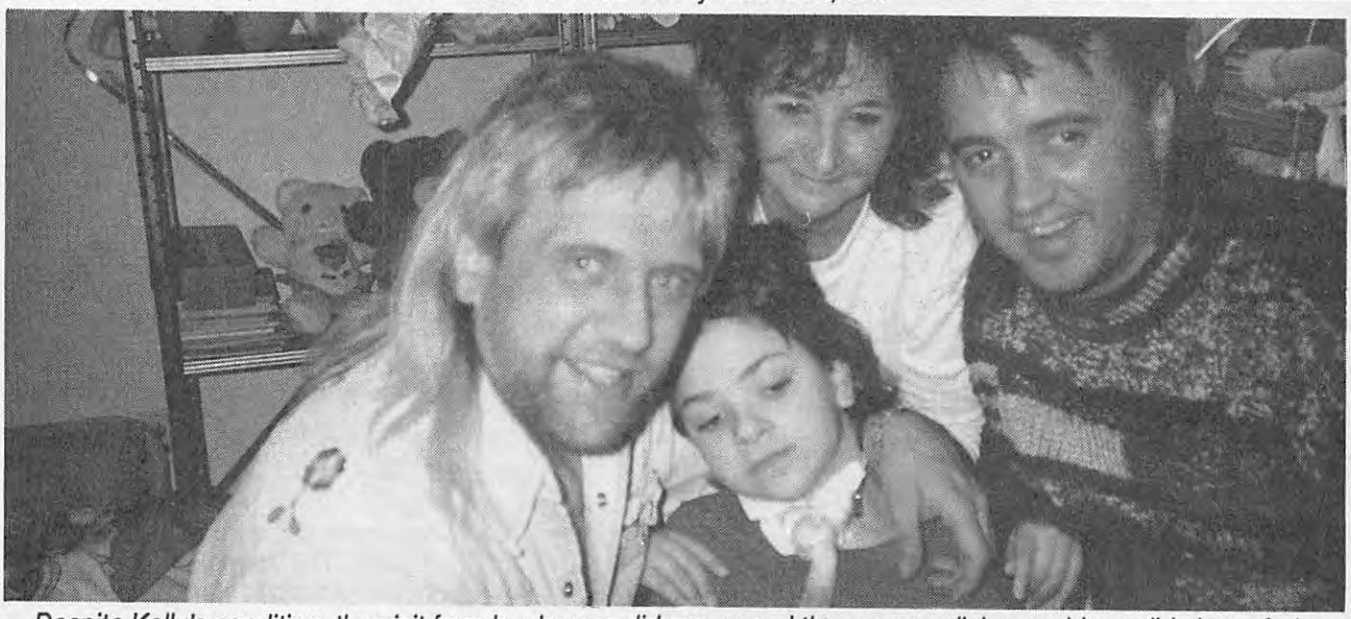
"Dream Works" helps fulfill the dreams of terminally ill children and those with life threatening illnesses. They depend solely on your contributions as well as volunteer and community support. Similar organizations are at work in your area. Won't you please help make the dreams of our wonderful youngsters a reality?

Kelly Kiser of Greenville, Tennessee receives a surprise visit from Ricky Morton & Robert Gibson—the Rock & Roll Express! photo: Billie Jessee

few months ago, her favorite pastime was watching the famed Rock 'n Roll Express in the squared circle. Unable to go to live matches, she had to be content with watching them on television. Dream-Work contacted Robert Gibson, and Robert visited Kelly, keeping a periodic check on her condition. On January 12, Ricky Morton and Robert appeared at her bedside for a visit. Despite the fact that her condition was considered a "semi—coma," it's obvious from the smile on Kelly's face that she does, indeed, know who she's meeting with.

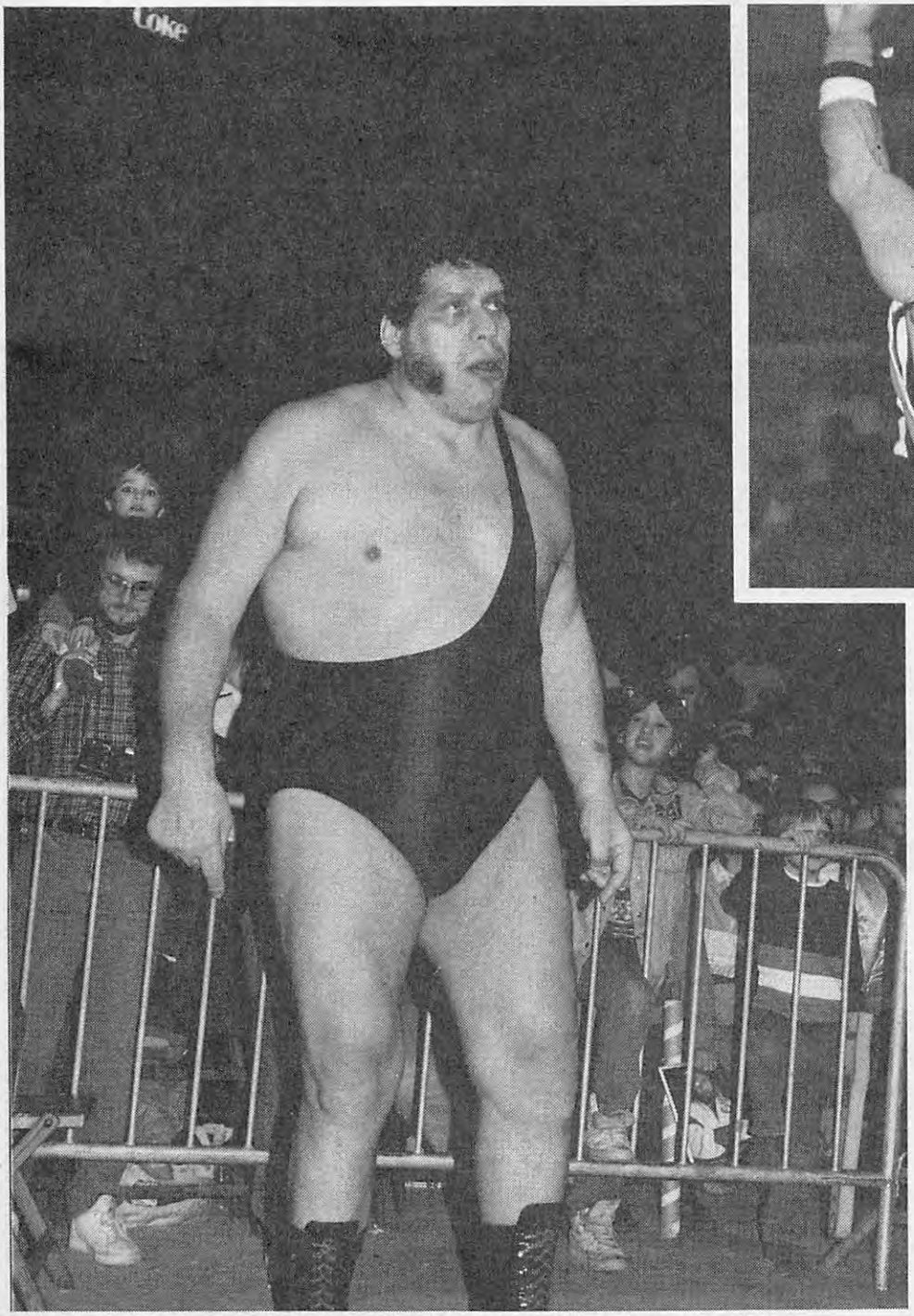
I'd like to thank Billie Jessee of Kingsport, Tennessee for bringing these stories to my attention, and for providing photographs of the children and the wrestlers. It's a rare treat, in today's world, to find out that people are better than you had dared hope.

Anyone else have a story to share? Send it to me, care of this magazine, and I'll be happy to include it.

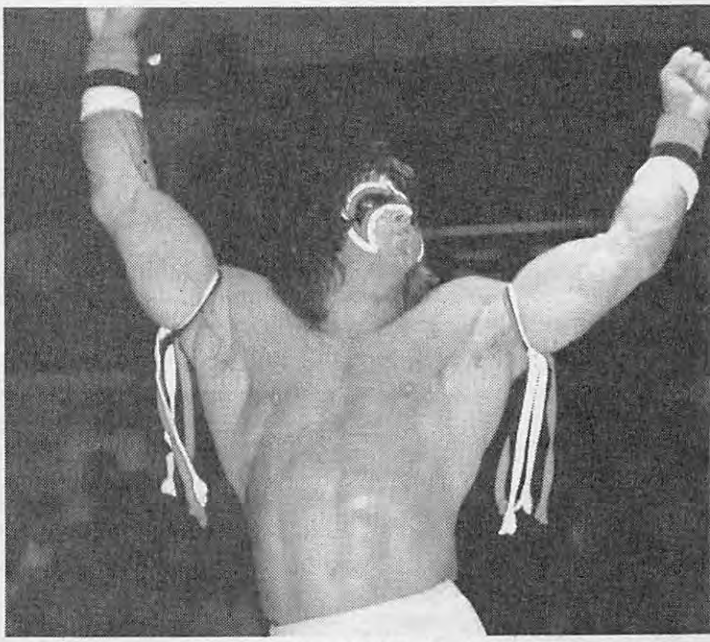


Despite Kelly's condition, the visit from her heroes did more good than any medicine could possibly hope for! photo: Billie Jessee

Andre the Giant Pinned & Humiliated in Less Than 30 Seconds!



Andre the Giant has seen the face of wrestling's future and it is the Ultimate Warrior! photo: Tony Valotta

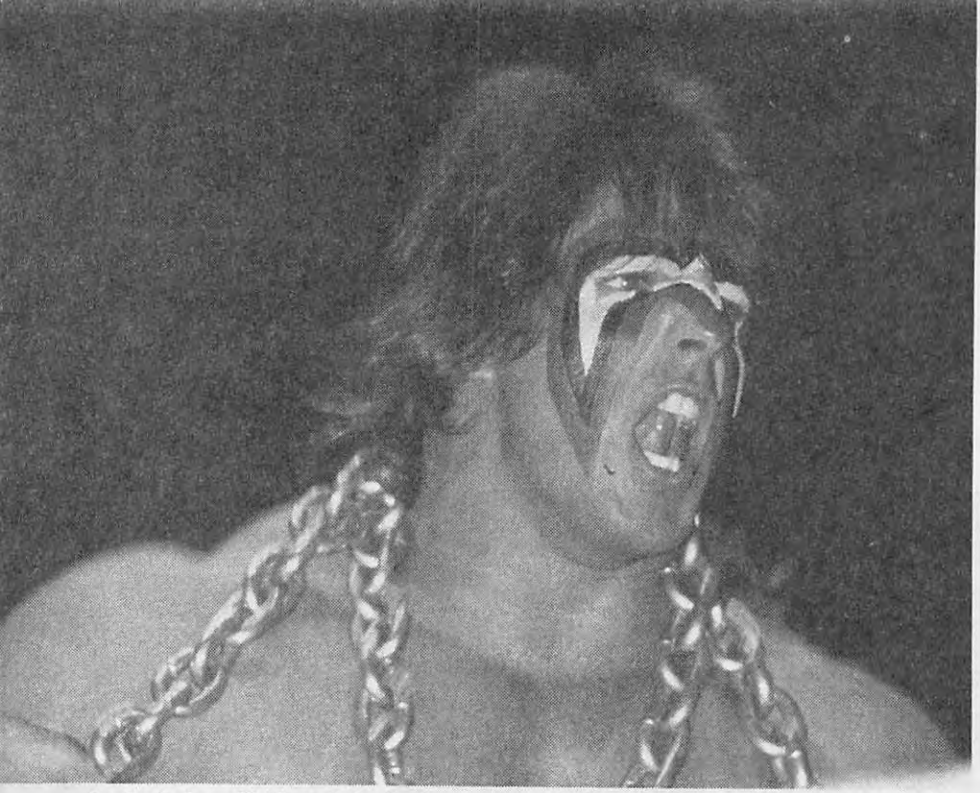


The Ultimate Warrior basks in the glory of his incredible pinfall conquest over Andre the Giant. Can anything stop the Warrior now in his quest for the World's heavyweight championship? photo: Howard Baum

The unthinkable has just happened! Andre the Giant, the man-mountain of the World Wrestling Federation came crashing to the mat like a fallen oak and was pinned in less than 30 seconds. His opponent was the power crazed Ultimate Warrior who has been on a wild uncontrollable winning streak with no end in sight.

You might say to yourself—perhaps Andre was having an "off night" where nothing went right.

Maybe you have a point, but there is one factor that we've left out of this story. Andre was pinned two nights in a row by the Ultimate Warrior!



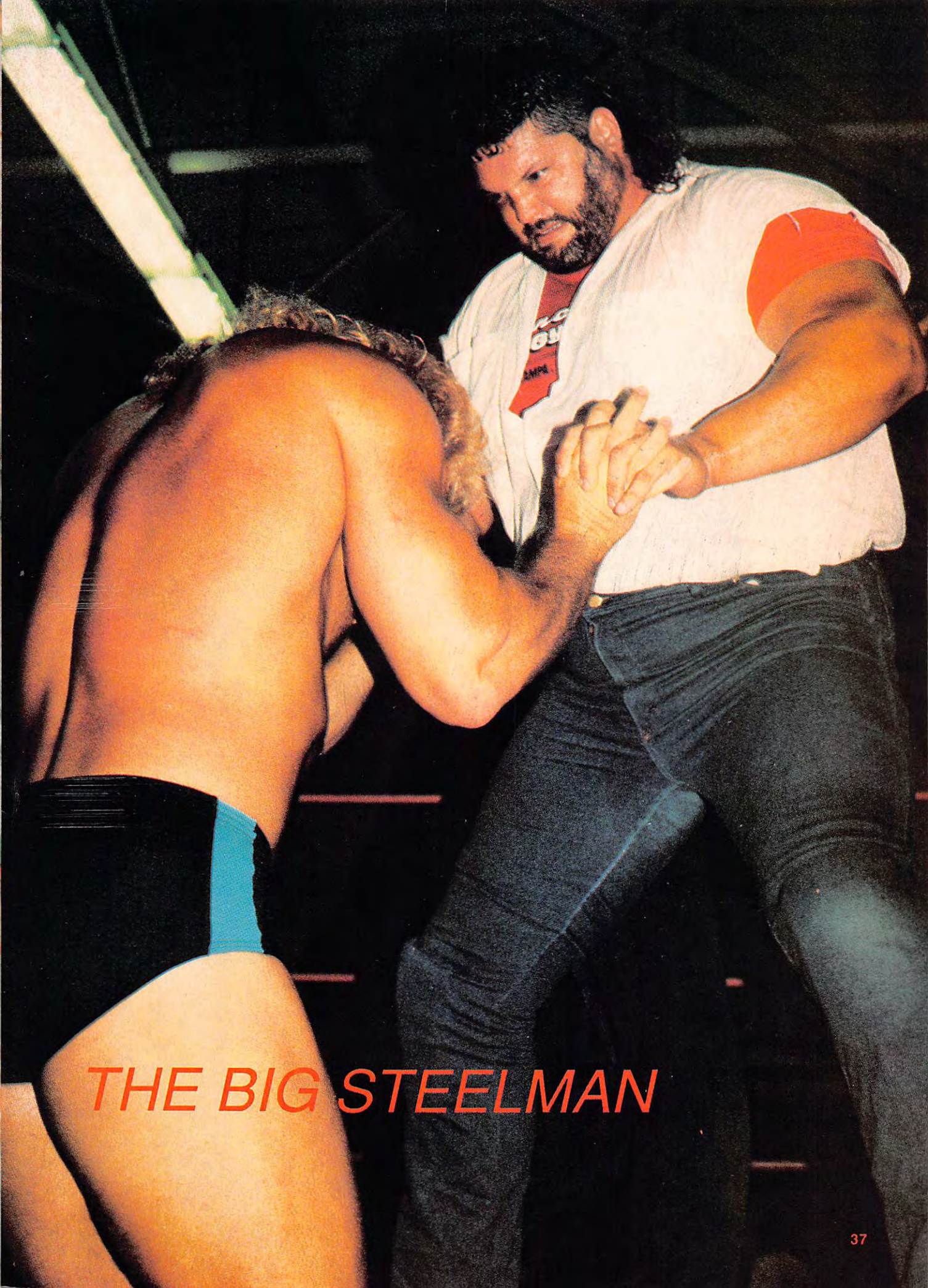
Andre's humiliating defeats have placed the Warrior as the top seeded contender for Hulk Hogan's W.W.F. championship. photo: Matt DeLuca

Gold Belt Wrestling's correspondents were on hand to witness both events and despite the fact that the W.W.F. does not use a time keeper to keep track of the length of the matches, we have come as close as possible to determining the actual time of each pinfall!

When Andre and the Warrior first tangled in Tuscon, Arizona, the painted powerhouse performed two clotheslines (one to the front of the head and the second to the back of the neck) which literally wiped out the towering French man. The time of the pinfall an incredible 12 seconds!

The following night in Las Vegas, Nevada, the Warrior landed a kick to Andre's midsection and felled the "Eight Wonder of the World" in approximately 25 seconds!

In recent months we have seen a weary Andre go through the motions in his matches. Is this the beginning of the end for the once indestructible legend? photo: Matt DeLuca



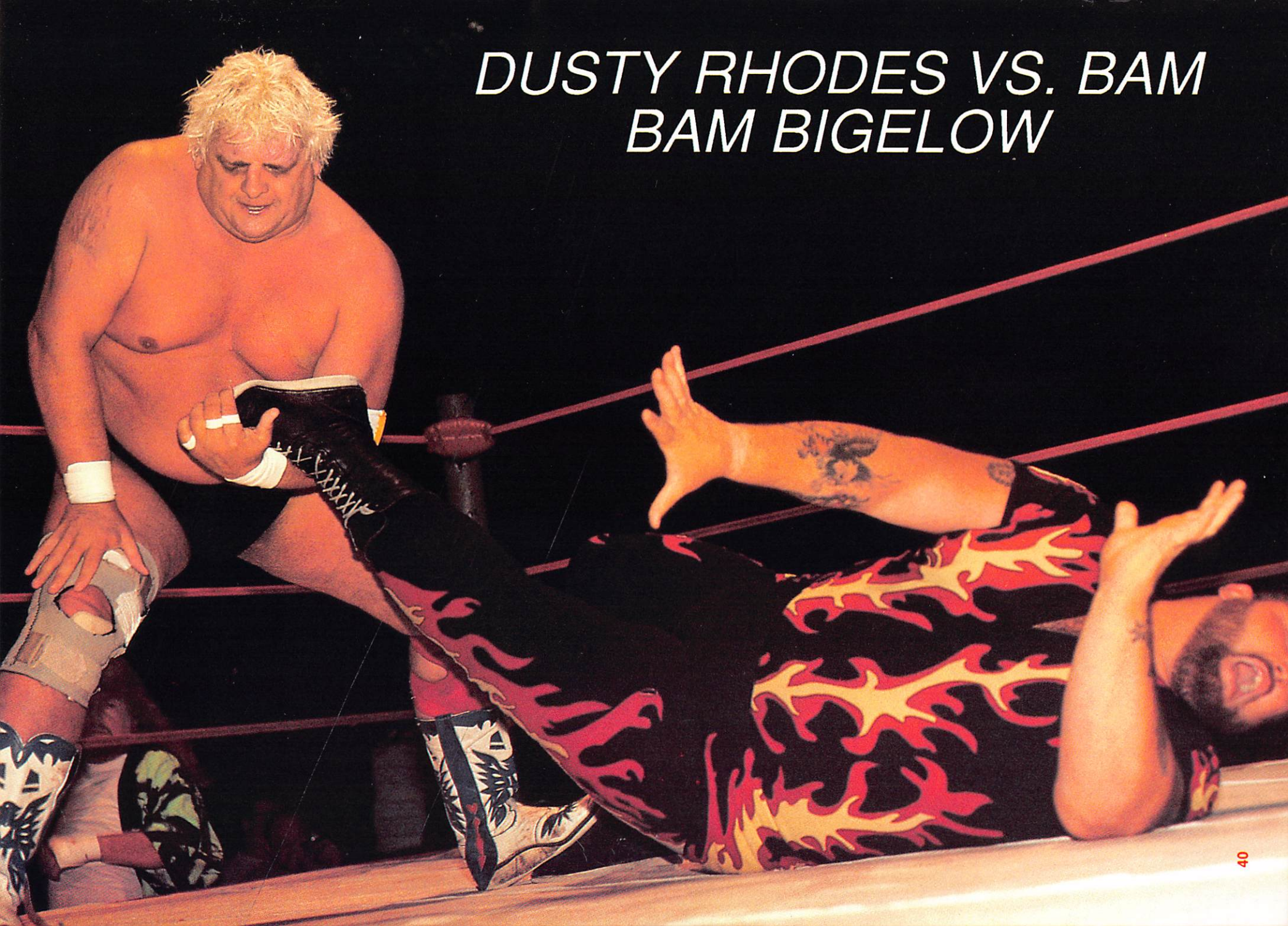
THE BIG STEELMAN

JAPAN'S FINEST!

(from left to right: Mariko Mizoguchi, Sachiko Koganei, Utako Hozumi, Miki Handa, Reiko Hoshino and Shizuko Takahashi) Photo: Maniax Ltd.

RON GARVIN VS. GREG VALENTINE

Photo: Jack Russell



DUSTY RHODES VS. BAM BAM BIGELOW

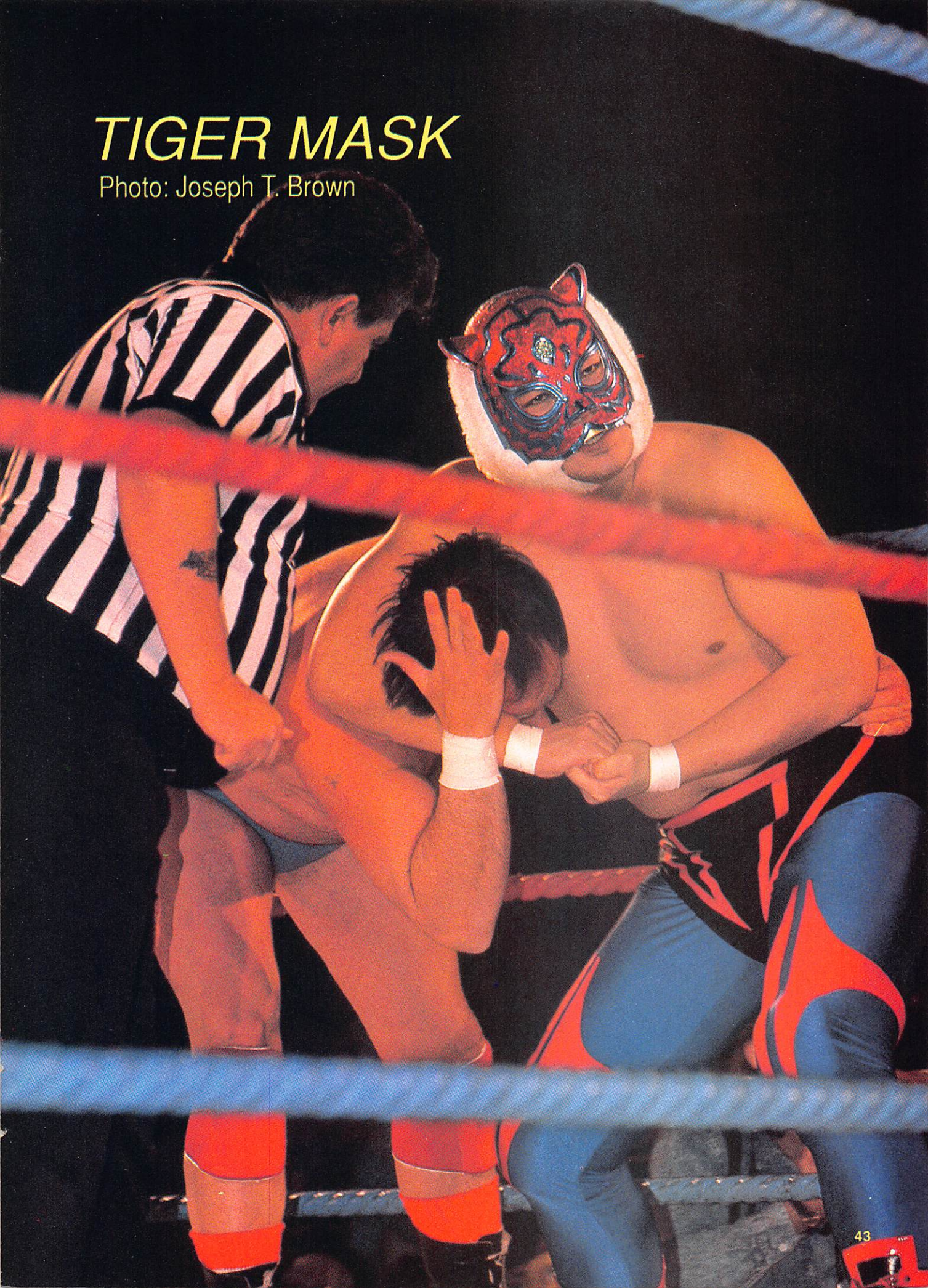
LINDA DALLAS

"HACKSAW" JIM DUGGAN

Photo: Jack Russell

TIGER MASK

Photo: Joseph T. Brown



BAMB
Photo:Dyane Kirkland

A Bit of Southern Sunshine Named Bambi

by Dyane Kirkland

A lot of people have mistaken ideas about women in the grappling game—especially Southern women. First, they think women have to be rough and tough to get into wrestling. They assume Southern women are too soft to be wrestlers. Let me educate you by introducing a young woman from Stone Mountain, Georgia, who goes by the name of Bambi.

If you meet Bambi on the street, you might not recognize her. She's a quiet, very shy young woman with a quick sense of humor and a fetching smile. In jeans and boots, she looks similar to many of the country girls found all over the South: long dark hair, lithe build and totally enjoying life.

See her in the ring, and she's all business. That business is a dream she has cherished since attending her first live match at the age of nine. Surprisingly enough, her first major "idol" in wrestling was Ole Anderson, but as she explains it, Ole was tough and strong in the ring, and was (and still is) kind and gentle with the kids who came up to him after the matches. You can see that same attitude in Bambi, who, despite her shyness, never turns away from her fans.

After graduating high school, Bambi had a good job with a local government agency. Her dream, however, wouldn't let her

Bambi proudly defends her W.W.A. World's Women's championship against the very best in the grappling game.

With a combination of looks, brains and talent, Bambi is quickly carving a reputation for herself as a newfangled grapplerette for the 1990's.

The popular Georgia mat maiden is dynamite personified in the ring, but after a match, she's a shy Southern belle.

rest. For a short time, Bambi worked as a valet to a wrestler called "The Hunter" in Memphis. Deciding she wanted more, she came back to her home state, where Ted Oates, a Georgia native with an impressive wrestling history, trained her for her first professional bout.

For Bambi, the life she lives is the fulfillment of her childhood dream. Not only has she won the hearts of the fans in the South, but at 22, she's travelled all over Europe, making friends wherever she goes. Among the countries she's wrestled in, Austria, Germany, Holland and Denmark stand out as high points. Germany, however, was a bit unusual: the German fans do not believe women should wrestle!

"Several places we couldn't wrestle at all, they simply wouldn't allow it," Bambi told me. "One place we did get to wrestle was near an American military base—the audience was mostly from the base, and they loved us."

She also told me that Wendi Richter, also on the tour, was booked as a special referee for a men's match, but that the all—German audience wouldn't stand for it and had her replaced. It's not really meant as disrespect—the German people are simply not as open-minded about a woman's place as Americans evidently are!

What was her favorite place on the tour? "I liked them all," she told me, "but Germany has some of the most beautiful scenery around. I'd like to go back and do it again—even if I don't get to wrestle!"

Lest we think only European men feel that way about lady wrestlers, I should mention that I asked Bambi how she was treated by the men wrestlers. Mind you, I know some of them are not kind to women in the business—especially the old timers who don't approve of women in wrestling. Bambi, however, takes a philosophical attitude about it, saying it's part of getting along in any business.

When I went after personal information (like any good journalist!), she was a bit shy. She admitted she enjoyed swimming and sunbathing, working out, and riding motorcycles, as well as cruising in her 300ZX. Her favorite food is pizza, and her favorite color is red. She's a country and rock music fan, listing Hank Williams Jr., David Allen Coe, ZZ Top and Foreigner among her favorites. (And for those of you who might be interested, her birthday is May 24.)

I asked her what she planned to do in the future. Any plans to leave wrestling? Her shocked look said she'd never think of it. In fact, she's looking forward to a trip to Japan, somewhere she's never been. Meanwhile, she's defending the WWA women's title around the U.S., and living the dream she keeps alive.

If you see Bambi at a match, go up and say hello. She's a bit shy at first, but she's dynamite in the ring, and a good sport out of it. Posing for pictures and signing autographs is her way of showing appreciation to the fans who love her. Look for her to go a long way in the future: a combination of looks, brains and talent like this is hard to beat!

This rising star can be rough and tough when she wants to be and in the ring, she ALWAYS wants to be rough and tough!

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GOLD BELT WRESTLING is pleased to present the world's greatest wrestling fans - our readers. Each issue we offer the largest selection of wrestling pen pals to be found in any magazine!

Would you like to be a part of our ever growing list of pen pals? It's easy and fun, but best of all it's FREE!

Send your name, address, age, favorite wrestler(s) or promotion(s) and we'll add you to our pen pal club. Watch for your name and address in an upcoming issue of GOLD BELT WRESTLING. Send along a photo of yourself and we'll print that too!

Send all information to:
PEN PAL PARADE
P.O. Box 1917 - Murray Hill Station
New York, NY 10156

Shawntee Beverly (age 11), 4839 Pine Drive, Raleigh, NC 27604 - wanted: NWA fans of Steamboat, Steve Williams, Midnight Express, the Steiner brothers, Eddie Gilbert, the Dynamic Dudes, the Fantastics and any other good guys.

Jimmy Johnson (age 12), 14 Sherwood Forest, Rockdale, TX 76567 - wanted: fans of Sting, Hogan, Jerry Lawler and Kerry & Kevin von Erich.

Paul Ladd, 4469 41st St., Hillsboro, Ohio 45133 - wanted: fans of Hogan, the Rockers, Sting, the Road Warriors & the Ultimate Warrior.

Barry Rea Greiner (age 25), 107 S.E. Dralabor Road, Ankeny, Iowa 50021 - wanted: fans of Sting, the Road Warriors, Dusty Rhodes, the Ultimate Warrior, Hogan and the lovely Elizabeth.

Renee Payne (age 22), 128 Chestnut St., Mars Hills, NC 28754 - wanted: fans of Bobby Eaton, Joel Deaton and all Atlantic Coast wrestlers and anyone who dislikes the Road Warriors.

Jerry Adams, 6356 Henry Smith Road, Murrayville, GA 30564 - wanted: fans of King Duggan, Flair, Steamboat, Dusty & Dustin Rhodes and anyone who hates Lex Luger, the SST, Randy Savage and the Freebirds.

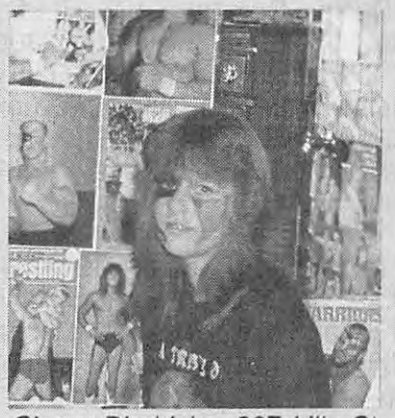
K.C. Wikhan (age 30), 466C Liberty Street, #110, Little Ferry, NJ 07643 - wanted: fans of the NWA, ladies between the ages of 20-25 and pen pals who enjoy female wrestling.

Lee Johnson, 206 Vernon Avenue, Glen Burnie, MO 21061 - wanted: fans of Hulk Hogan, the Junk Yard Dog, Sting, Tito Santana, Brutus Beefcake & George Steele.

Bob Koenig (age 16), 1817 North 70th Street, Wauwatosa, WI 53213 - wanted: fans of Big Boss Man, Akeem, Bam Bam Bigelow, Big Steelman, the Ultimate Warrior, Beefcake and the Bushwackers.

Alison Parquette (age 11), 25 Seaside Avenue, Saco, ME 04072 - wanted: would like to swap & trade any material on the Hart Foundation.

Sara Fleske (age 18), 2118 Brenner, Saginaw, MI 48602 - wanted: fans of Sting, Luger, Piper, Eddie Gilbert, Rick Steiner & the Midnight Express, also fans who hate Flair, Windham, Freebirds, Hogan, Savage, Rude & Rotunda.



Ginger Diedrichs, 927 Lilly Ct., Palatine, IL 60074 - wanted: fans of Al Perez, Kevin Sullivan and the Von Erich brothers.

W. Leon Barfield (age 21), Eight S. Eugenia Place N.W., Atlanta, GA 30318 - wanted: fans of G.L.O.W. (ages 16-30) especially fans of Vicki Victory, Cheyenne, Cher and Godiva.

Kathy Harger, 911 E. Grant St., Greenville, MI 48838 - wanted: all information on Mil Mascaras (including a possible address to write to him) and would like to buy or trade VHS video tapes of Mil's matches or movies.

Kay Burcham, P.O. Box 9328,

Norfolk, VA 23505 - wanted: pen pals of all ages in particular anyone with contacts to get into the professional ranks.

Jennifer Punke (age 15), 1116 Harmony Avenue, Marzon, IL 60444 - wanted: fans of Randy Savage, Elizabeth & Bret Hart.

Peggy Sebastian (age 24), P.O. Box 791, Paris, KY 40361 - wanted: would like to hear from all fans of Barry Windham and would like to purchase any items on Barry.

Stephanie Howard (age 12), Box 400 Smith Road, Apalachicola, FL 32320 - wanted: fans of Jim Duggan, Kerry von Erich, Sting, Lex Luger, Hulk Hogan, Randy Savage, Steve Casey & Michael Hayes.

Dallise Ray (age 17), Rt. 1 - Box 398-01, Conway, AR 72302 - wanted: fans of Tully Blanchard, Ric Flair, Sting, Lex Luger, Randy Savage, Beefcake, Hogan & R&R Express.

Tammy Hall, Route 1 - Box 44, Elora, TN 37328 - wanted: fans of Bret Hart, Beefcake, the Ultimate Warrior, Jake Roberts, Steamboat, the Windhams, Demolition, the Rockers, Tom Prichard, the Freebirds, Jeff Jarrett and many, many more.

Richard Farrell (age 27), 1141 Johnson Street, Beloit, WI 53511 - wanted: fans of Hogan, Wahoo McDaniel, Sting, Tito Santana, Beefcake, Flair, John Studd and other stars from the WWF, NWA & AWA.

Combat Sports, P.O. Box 651 - Gracie Station, New York, NY 10028-0011 would like to trade VHS video tapes of matches from the U.S. and Japan for the LJN WWF wrestling figures (preferably in the unopened, original packages).

Joshua Hansen (age 15), Spaulding Youth Center, Shedd Road, Northfield, NH 03276 - wanted: pen pals (ages 15-22) who are big fans of Jake Roberts, Hulk Hogan, the Road Warriors, Sting and Kerry & Kevin von Erich.

P.J. Andrews (age 21), 2920 Apollo Drive, Saginaw, MI 48601 - wanted: fans of Michael Hayes, Terry Gordy, Buddy Roberts, Steve Williams, Dusty Rhodes, Bob Orton, the SST and Badd Company.

Michelle Raye Olson (age 17), 5176 Maple Brook, apt. 2, Flint, MI 48507 would like to hear from ALL fans of Hulk Hogan.

Sheila Brinson (age 14), P.O. Box 896, Chocowinity, NC 27817 - wanted: pen pals (ages 14-18) who are fans of Sting, the Ultimate Warrior, Brutus Beefcake and all the good guys.

Lea Ann Brady (age 25), Rt. 5 - Box 471-A, Laurel, MS 39440 - wanted: pen pals who are big fans of "Rowdy" Roddy Piper.

Eddie Smith (age 41), Rt. 1 - Box, Carthage, TN 37030 - wanted: pen pals from around the world in particular ladies who enjoy the different wrestling promotions.

Sherry Bowman (age 28), Star Route, Ironton, Ohio 45638 - wanted: pen pals who like Michael Hayes, Jimmy Garvin, Ric Flair & Tommy Rich.

Trader Lockhart, P.O. Box 2908, Richmond, CA 94802 - wanted: chinless wrestling masks and video tapes from Alabama, Deep South, Continental, CWA & NWF promotions.

Duez Henderson (age 9), 19946 Westbrook, Detroit, MI 48219 - wanted: anyone who likes Hulk Hogan, the Ultimate Warrior & the Powers of Pain.

Tom McDonald (age 29), One Mile Hwy., Onaway, MI 49765 - wanted: pen pals as well as trade wrestling video tapes. All letters will be answered.

Mark Brambilla (age 14), 28 Barbara Road, Walpole, MA 02081 - wanted: fans of Randy Savage, the Honky Tonk Man, the Brain Busters, Ted DiBiase & Dino Bravo.

Ronnie Mocahbee (age 22), 211 Jupiter Cr., Dalton, GA 30720 - wanted: female pen pals (ages 18-25) who enjoy watching pro-wrestling.

Terrence Leonard (age 15), 653 41st, Des Moines, Iowa 50312 - wanted: all fans of those great cheating WWF bad guys.

Philip Powell, R #4, Box 57, Marion, IL 62959 - wanted: pen pals who are fans of Hulk Hogan.

Shannon Hartsock (age 13), 108 N. Seminole, Claremore, OK 74017 - wanted: fans of WWF good guys such as Brutus Beefcake, the Rockers, Demolition, the Ultimate Warrior

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Please return this questionnaire as soon as possible so that we can develop this publication to meet the needs of our readers.

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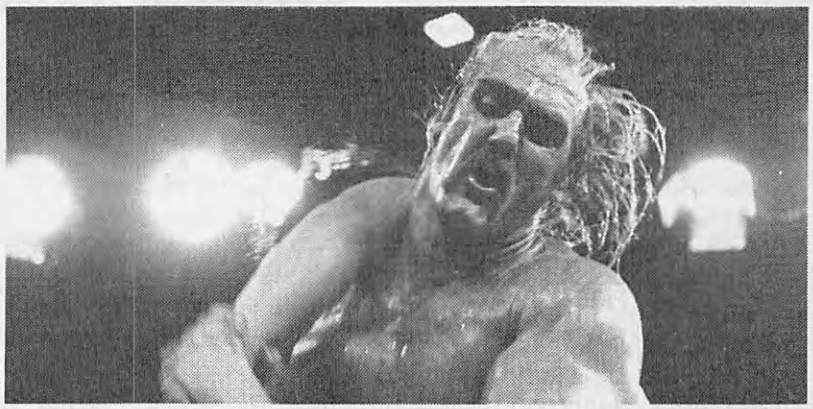

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also the Road Warriors & Jerry "the King" Lawler.

Paula Schofield, 290 North Road, Sudbury, MA 01776 - wanted:
will answer all letters from fans of the Ultimate Warrior, Luger, Beefcake & other NWA & WWF stars.

Kevin Elliott, 465 10th Avenue Drive N.E., Hickory, NC 28601 - wanted: fans of NWA, WCCW, WWF & AWA promotions.

Cindy Seymour (age 18), 8248 Ruidoso N.E., Albuquerque, NM 87109 - wanted: males ages 16-21 who like WWF & NWA good guys.

Danny Palombo, 8 Fowler Avenue, Ossining, NY 10562 - wanted: pen pals who are also interested in swapping photos of Lex Luger, the Ultimate Warrior, the Rockers, Hulk Hogan, Beefcake & other WWF stars.

Kim Lamberth (age 27), Route 1 Box 112, Statesville, NC 28677 would like to hear from fans (ages 27-37) of bad guys such as Kevin Sullivan and Barry Windham.

Gayle Jones (age 17), P.O. Box 13921, Salem, OR 97309 - wanted: all fans of wrestling.

Johnny Tschuta, 105 Metcalf St., Providence, RI 02904 - wanted: would like to trade tapes from Boston Garden & Madison Square Garden wrestling shows for early NWA, Japan and Philadelphia Spectrum matches.

Lane Joanna Estell (age 15), 2021 4 N.W. #107, Ardmore, OK 73401 - wanted: fans of Brad Armstrong, Steve Cox, Sting, Tim Horner, the Rockers, Kendall Windham, Tommy Jammer, Magnificent Mimi & Jeff Jarrett.

Katie Lee (age 39), 17525 South 71st Court, Unit 2C, Tinley Park, IL 60477 - wanted: photos of Kerry & Kevin von Erich and Rick Hazzard.

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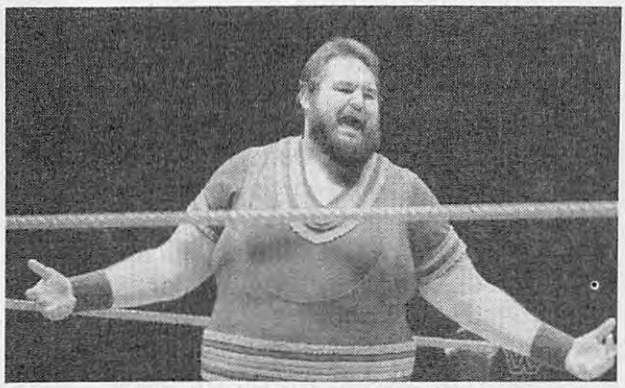
The Wrestling Kahuna's Insider Files!

Who are you going to call for the latest grappling news—the Wrestling Kahuna!

Greetings, grappling geeks and welcome to the Great Kahuna's tellin' it like it is and straight from the lip report on my view of this wacky battling sport of ours. Each issue we'll take a look at the superstars and the slugs, the champs and the chumps along with the has-beens and never-will-be's.

Starting off our report this month is the surprise election of



Akeem: destined to be a fan favorite? photo: Michael O'Hara

Japanese wrestling legend, Antonio Inoki to a position of office within Japan's House of Councilors (as if we don't have enough problems in politics already!). Since the election, Inoki has retired from active mat competition and will supposedly devote all of his time to his new, elected position.

Many American wrestling fans will remember Inoki from his horrible mixed match against Muhammad Ali back in 1976 in

The great communicator of the grappling game, the Wrestling Kahuna, presents the latest news, views and opinions on the rasslin' biz as only he can!

which the Asian great did a tremendous impersonation of a Times Square hooker, spending the complete time of the contest on his back! What next? We've already had actors in political office and now wrestlers (some say it's the same thing!).

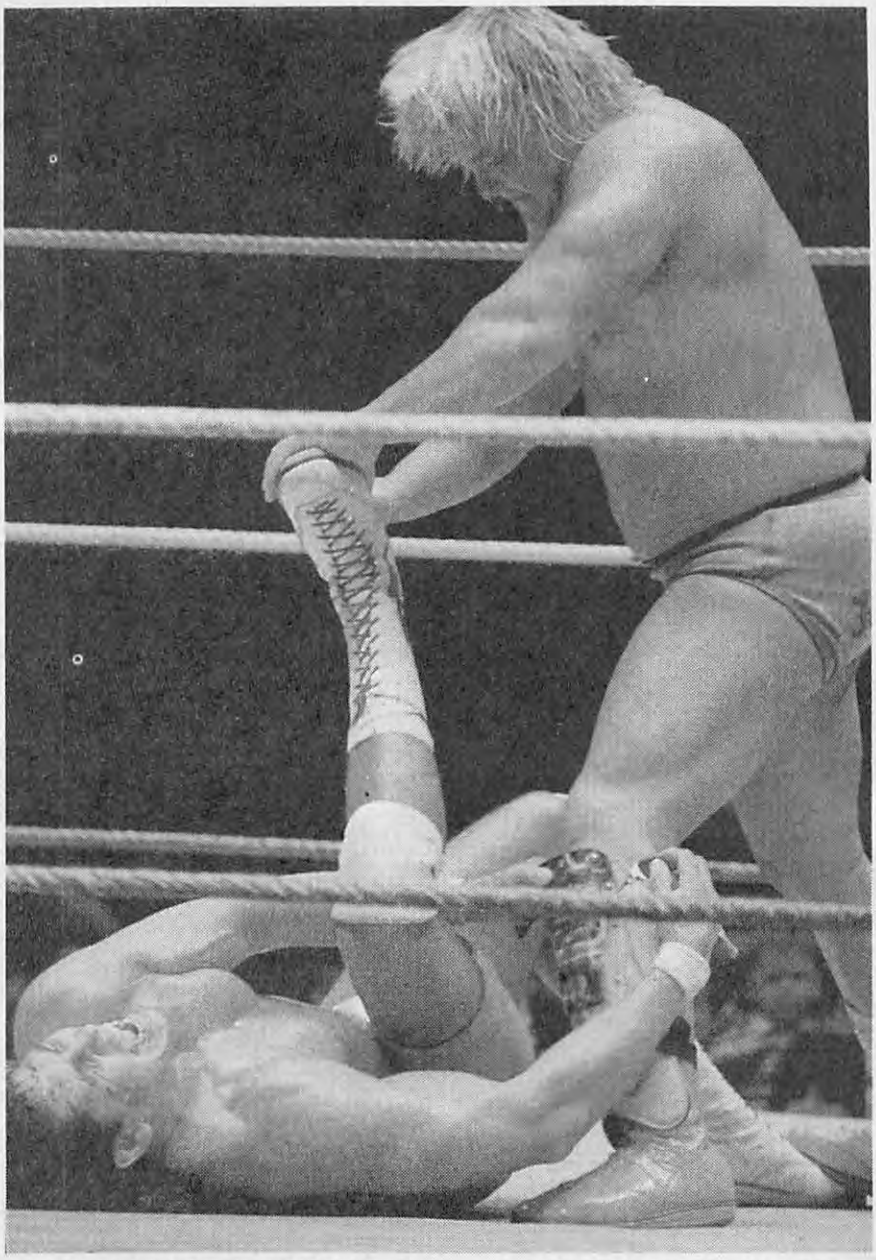
Jesse "the Body" Ventura has even shown interest in running for mayor in a small Minnesota hamlet. Should Ted DiBiase ever think about running for office, I'm getting a passport... and fast!

The American Wrestling Association is developing a new match concept called "the Team Challenge Series", which from what I've heard will be two teams, comprised of men, women and midgets, battling it out with the wins and losses counting as points. I don't know the exact specifications of the point system, but I sure hope it's easier to tabulate than the system used in roller derby!

Akeem seems to be gaining a following in the World Wrestling Federation! Fans of "the African Dream" really enjoy his pre-match shuffle and according to various sources, the Boss Man has had choice words with his partner in recent months. Look for a split sometime soon (possibly by the time you read this.) Waiting in the wings is the Big Steel Man, who will make a potent, but slow moving connection with the Boss Man.

From what I can surmise from family, friends and fans, you either love THE BOBBY HEENAN SHOW or you hate it! There just doesn't seem to be anyone sitting the fence on this one.

You have to give "the Brain" credit, he's held on to some decent rating points for most weeks and considering he's not really that popular a W.W.F. "character", it speaks well of his efforts. In my own humble (?) opinion, the show comes across as a forced piece of slapstick that insults those involved and more importantly, its audience.



Greg Valentine is the last of a rugged breed. photo: Michael O'Hara

So, what was everybody expecting-Nightline?

Do you ever wonder if those people who get humiliated during Rick Rude and Ted DiBiase's skits are "plants" in the audience? I still feel bad for that young lady who was embarrassed a few months ago when Rude refused to kiss her because she didn't live up to his "standards". Hate makes the turnstiles click, but that is a pathetic way to pull people into the live shows. It would serve Rude right, if he "french kissed" a gal with a case of mononucleosis!

Greg "the Hammer" Valentine is looking for a way to get out of the rut he's been in for the last year or so. This guy may not be the most likeable human being around, but he is one of the last truly rugged competitors in the business. If he can't get himself in line for title shots in the W.W.F., he would be well advised to venture back into the N.W.A. Could you imagine Greg against the likes of Rick Flair or Sting? WOW!

Second generation wrestlers report: Dustin "the Natural" Rhodes has really come into his own in the Memphis-based U.S.W.A. as the youngster is determined to make it on his

own and not ride on the coattails of his famous father. Good for him, because this kid is going to make it on great ability and talent.

David Sammartino, son of the "Living Legend" himself, has developed into one of the most complete wrestling packages in the profession today! David, who wrestles and resides in Georgia, has evolved tremendously since his days in the W.W.F., and most fans would probably NOT recognize his new look of blonde hair and well-sculptured muscle. Let's hope David starts appearing on some major league circuits in the very near future. He deserves it!

I'm not usually one to pick on the smaller, regional promotions, after all, they have a hard enough time as it is competing against these oversized conglomerate promotions, who steamroll into their territories and lure the best talent away, but their is a "scam" going on over the last few months in the Pacific Northwest that really gets my blood boiling!

"Crumb Bums of the Month" awards go out to both Al Madril and Beetlejuice (Art Barr), who are playing upon the heated emotions of the local fans to evoke some pretty decent "side money".

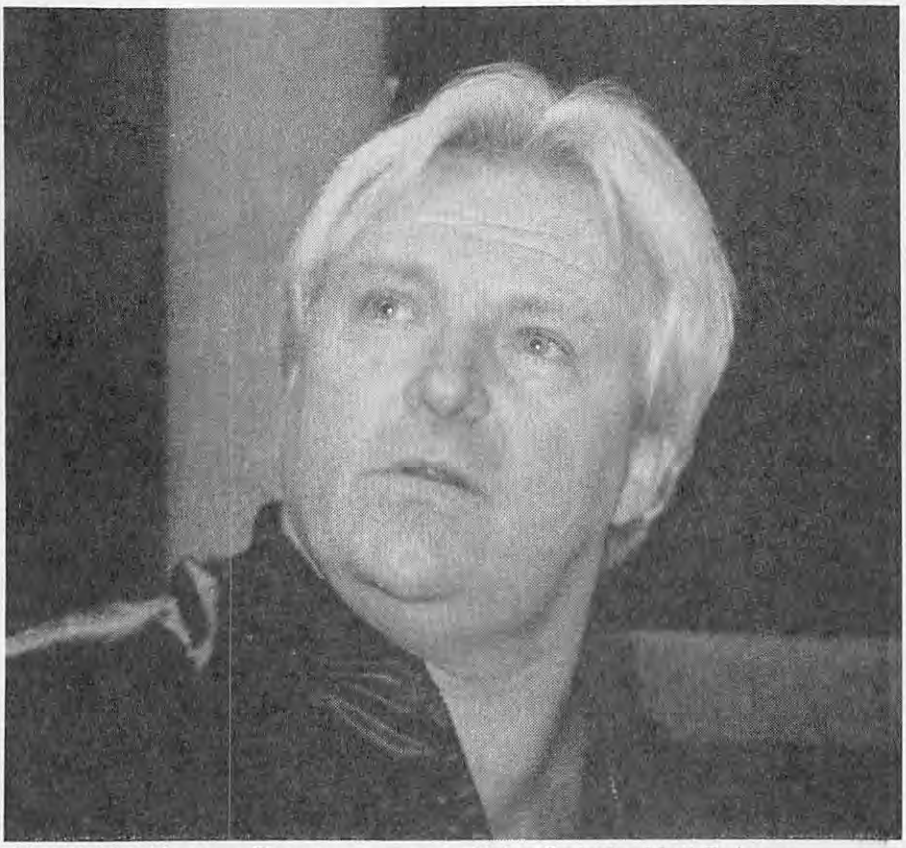
They've developed this "angle" in which Madril wagers with Beetlejuice that he can beat the the popular local favorite. "Juice" accepts the challenge, but claims that he has no money to back up the bet (yeah, yeah—don't we all know "deadbeats like that!)-Anyway, Madril taunts the fans, provoking them to put their money where their mouths are. It gets to the point where the local hero collects so much money that Madril "begs" the audience to stop as he won't be able to meet his end of the wager.

This isn't the first time that they've pulled a stunt like this in the area. Pretty sad when a promotion will allow their wrestlers to create gimmicks like this rather than pay them a decent wage. If wrestlers have to compromise their ethics in the name of a few dollars more, then it's time to look around for another line of work.

Antonio Inoki—wrestling legend and politician!

Speaking of work. (How's that for a smooth segue?), Jerry "the King" Lawler has to be one of the hardest working wrestlers in America today! His recent series of championship clashes with the still incredible Mil Mascaras are beyond compare. Lawler, who has been a main event staple on the Southern circuits for many years, gives 100% in each and every match whether it's before thousands of fans at the Mid-South Coliseum or hundreds at a high school benefit show. "The King" is a class act.

There are dozens of accomplished mat marvels working the independents who are deserving of top spots with any of the major wrestling organizations. Some of the wrestlers I'd like to see make it to the "big time" include Austin Idol, Nord the Barbarian, Tom Zenk, Mondo Kleen, Leon "Big Van Vader" White, "Hustler" Rip Rogers, Chick Donovan, Scotty "the Body" Levy, Mike Jackson and countless others (who I'll mention in future columns).



The Bobby Heenan Show: success or stinker? photo: Matt DeLuca

Well, I've reached my time limit. I'll see you all back here in sixty days with the latest scoops!

KERRY VON ERICH

Photo: Bob Miller

Hulk Hogan vs. Mike Tyson!

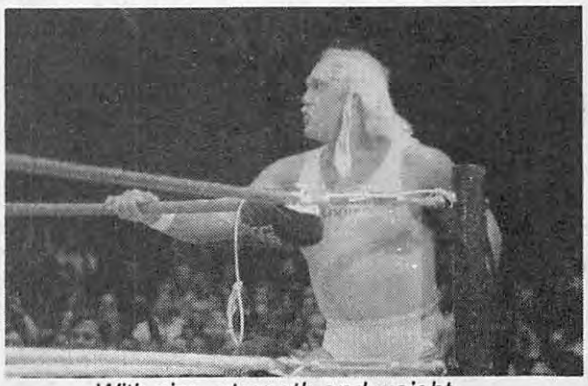
— Do both men fear this match? —

by Michael O'Hara

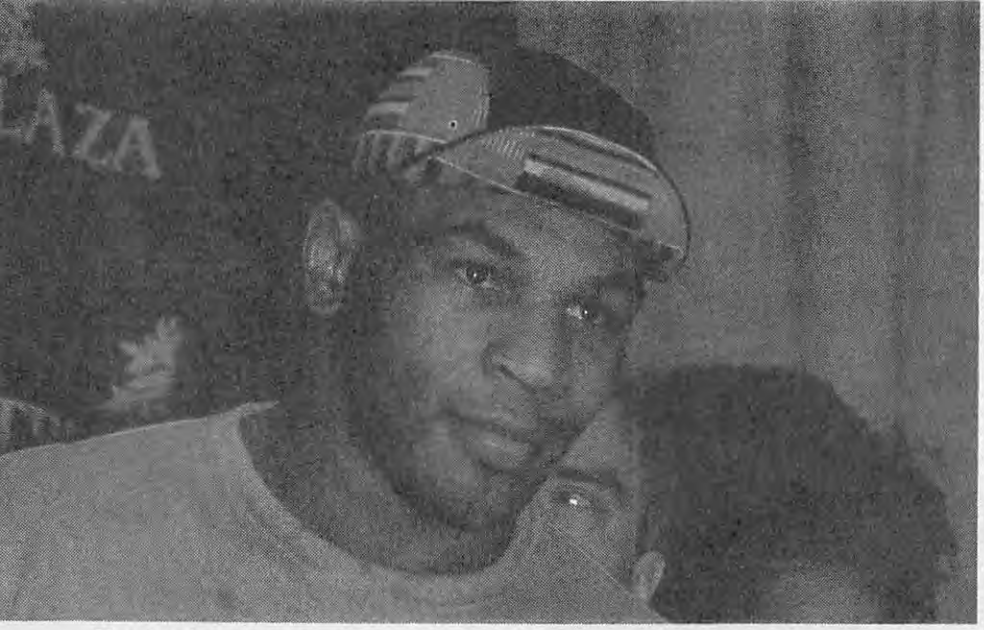
Mike Tyson's firm grasp on the heavyweight boxing championship of the world has made him a very wealthy man. Is "Iron" Mike man enough to cast aside inferior challengers and accept a serious ring foe in the form of Hulk Hogan? photo: Jack Russell

Whenever boxing champion Mike Tyson or wrestling kingpin Hulk Hogan enter the squared circle to wage war against another ranked contender, two things are certain. The toughest of opponents are never even given a slim chance of winning by the experts in both fields, and the matches, although main events pulling in millions of dollars, are usually very short.

With such superb champions facing mediocre rivals, it would appear as if boxing and wrestling promotions are headed for some "dog days" of indifferent fan appeal. After all, it's very hard for any sports enthusiast to work himself up into a frenzy when he knows full well that the champion will pummel his hapless foe in under ten min-



With size, strength and weight always in the Hulkster's corner, how well would the W.W.F. champion fare against a younger, better conditioned and equally powerful opponent such as Mike Tyson? photo: Tiffany Loewe



The boxing great is quite confident that he can eliminate any competitor placed into the track of professional competition. Crushing Hulk Hogan could possibly put an end to wrestling's popularity and enhance boxing's appeal once again. photo: Russell

utes or three rounds.

To spice up the boxing and wrestling scene, it's time to seriously consider a Hulk Hogan vs. Mike Tyson match up! Although Hogan fares somewhat better than Tyson in regards to a list of ranked contenders, is there anyone out there in wrestling TV land who really think that Zeus or the Big Steel Man have any chance of upending wrestling's biggest star?

As for Tyson, stiff competition has been redefined to mean anyone who can remain standing in the ring for close to 90 seconds. That doesn't sound too promising for boxing fans who were weaned on the titanic exploits of such pugilistic marvels as Ali, Frazier and Foreman. For the sake of both sports, a cross-over confrontation would satisfy both, huge audiences and would most likely set a pay-per-view record that could stand for many, many years to come.

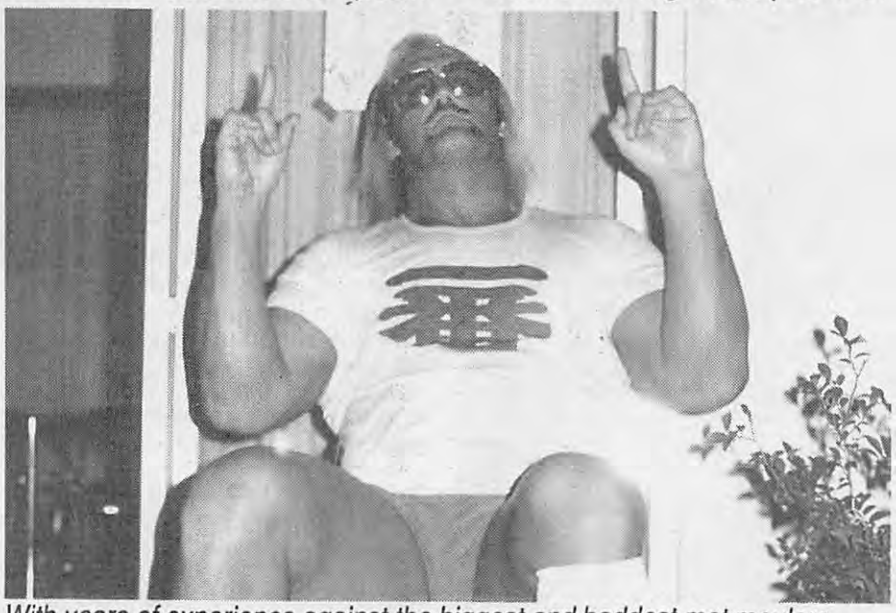
Unlike boxing champions of yesteryear, Tyson's physical prowess is on par with the mighty Hulkster's and this battle would pit the power of a knock out artist against the bone crushing might of a seasoned mat gladiator. Based on sheer brute force, both men appear to be incredibly equal.

Stamina remains a serious question of doubt for both men. We really haven't seen Tyson taken to the limit in a situation which called for him to use every last iota of physical reserve. A slight possible edge might arise in this situation due in large part to Tyson's training regimen which includes rope and road work as well as a varied assortment of exercises designed to develop his cardiovascular system to its zenith.

Hogan, on the other hand, appears to spend most of his training time in the gym, training with the heavy weights. Nagging knee problems and other physical ailments might put the Hulkster at a disadvantage. Most of the W.W.F. champions opponents are usually men who are carrying around excess weight such as the Big Boss Man, Akeem, King Kong Bundy and Andre the Giant. Ironically, it has been ring challengers such as Roddy Piper, Randy Savage and Paul Orndorff, who have given the champ his toughest bouts, due in large part to their superior stamina.

The age factor clearly falls in favor of Tyson, who is just reaching his maturity in the fight game. Hogan, with close to 15 years of mat activity to his credit, has been to the mountain top and clearly looks down at the road still before him.

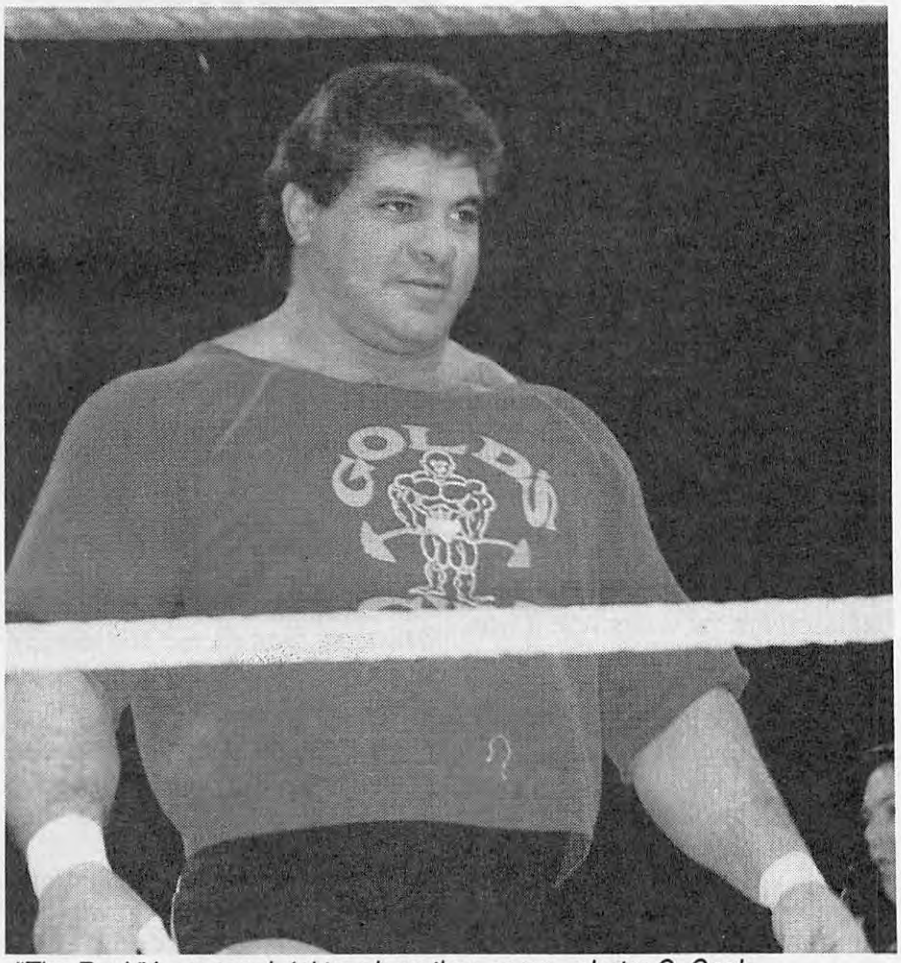
Mike Tyson battling Hulk Hogan is a dream match for most fans of wrestling and boxing. Let's hope both champions have enough guts and personal pride to pick up the banner set before them by millions of sports fans around the world who demand this match.



With years of experience against the biggest and baddest mat maulers, Hogan is very sure of himself and his position as the greatest pro-wrestler of all time would certainly be sealed with an impressive victory of the World boxing champ!

"Golden Grappler" Interview: Don Muraco

interview conducted by Dawn Lockwood



"The Rock" is as rough 'n' tough as they come. photo: C. Cook

GB: Were you a wrestling fan as a youngster?

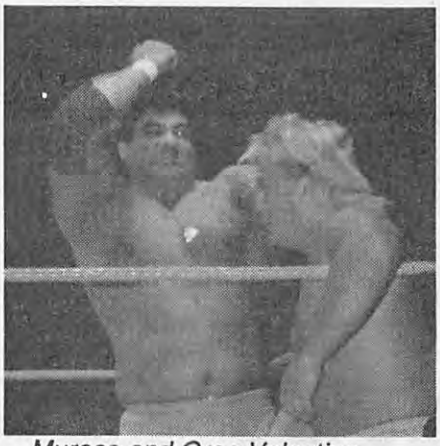
DM: Yes, I watched wrestling on television and followed the careers of Lord James Blears and King Curtis very closely.

GB: Were they responsible for your career choice?

DM: Well, I don't know if watching TV wrestling actually influenced me to become a professional wrestler. I became close to the Blears family. Lord James' son, Jim, Jr. and I surfed together in Hawaii and we both entered quite a number of local surfing contests, so I was exposed to it on a very personal/family level.

I went away to college for a couple of years and participated in amateur wrestling. I enjoyed the one-on-one competition. When I returned home to Hawaii, the Blears family encouraged me to turn professional and they set me up with a number of local bouts and that's what really got

"I wrestled Bob Backlund...to a one hour draw in the afternoon and later that same night, we wrestled to a one hour draw in Philadelphia. I wrestled for two hours in one day!"

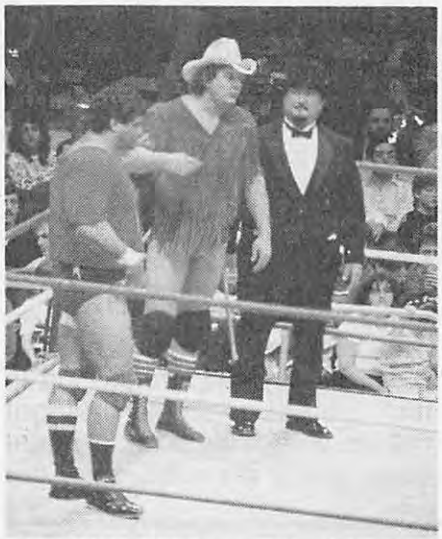


Muraco and Greg Valentine engaged in a brutal feud in the W.W.F. photo: Howard Baum

me started.

GB: Your wrestling style has no doubt drastically changed since your formative years as a pro. What do you feel are some of the biggest changes?

DM: In this business, I think the biggest change that happens to all pro-wrestlers is the maturity in mat technique that occurs. You learn the shortcuts, the proper and exact ways of doing things. You lose a great deal of enthusiasm and that extra drive that you started out with because you've been doing this for so long. You get very accustomed to being in the ring every night that you overcompensate and such. I think that's what is wrong with some of the older wrestlers. They actually have too much experience.



Under the management of Mr. Fuji, Don and "Cowboy" Bob Orton were a winning combination. photo: M. O'Hara

GB: Tell us about your first match? Were you nervous?

DM: Sure I was nervous. I wrestled Gene Kiniski. I was nervous and confused.

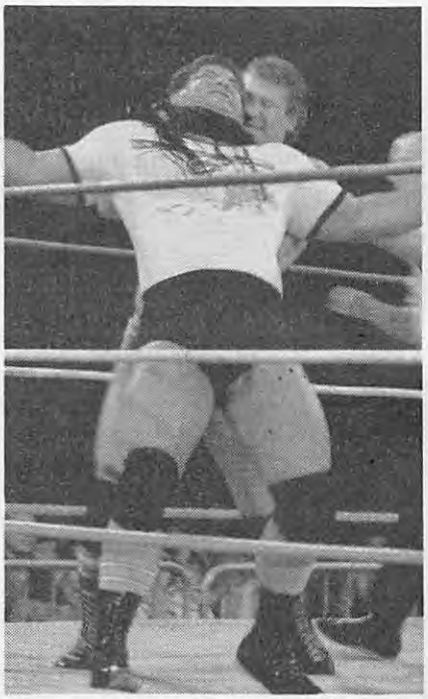
GB: You've gone through a number of personality changes in the course of your illustrious grappling career. How do you feel about these many changes and in your opinion, what made them come about?

DM: When I held the W.W.F. Intercontinental championship, I became set in my ways. When *Superstar" Billy Graham came back on the scene, I admired him and felt that I should help him because I was very much able to do so. The fans really had a lot to do with it from an emotional standpoint. The fans detested me for years and it was just something that came about. You just can't deny the fans I guess. My outlook changes depending upon the situation.

GB: The late Grand Wizard was a big part of your success in the W.W.F. How do you feel he helped your career? What are your feelings about him? Do you think he was one of the best managers of all—time?

DM: He was a great man and was so very insightful. In regards to his stature, he was only a 97-pound guy, but he knew more about the sport of professional wrestling than most wrestlers today. Anyone that knew him inside or out of this business said the same thing. He was a great man. He was one of the finest men to have ever been involved in professional wrestling.

GB: The Wizard was always at ringside during your matches. Now, you do not have a manag-

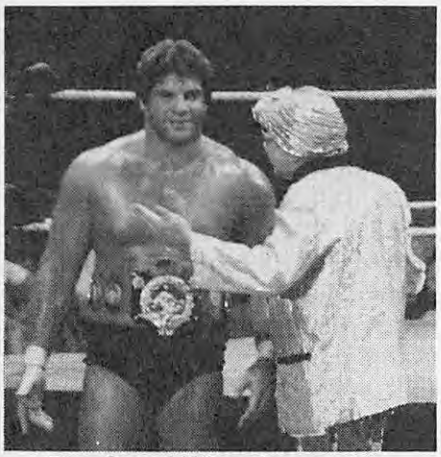


The team soon soured and Muraco and Orton became bitter rivals. photo: Howard Baum

er at ringside with you. Do you prefer to go it alone at this point in time?

DM: Yes, I prefer to go it alone at the present time, however I would look for a competent manager if the occasion called for it. As it is now, I dictate where I want to wrestle and negotiate my own contracts. I like it that way.at least for the time being.

"You can't deny the fans I guess. My outlook changes depending upon the situation."



The Grand Wizard was a big influence on the Hawaiian star's success.

GB: Are there some wrestling matches that really stick out in your mind?

DM: I can remember quite a few that were really special. One day, I wrestled Bob Backlund for the W.W.F. championship in the afternoon to a one hour draw and later that same night, we wrestled again to a one hour draw in Philadelphia. I wrestled for two hours in one day! I've had some really tough matches with Pedro Morales and Tito Santana. A cage match in St. Petersburg, Florida against Ivan Koloff is a match I won't ever forget. I've wrestled just about everyone. Roddy Piper is another name that quickly comes to mind.

Opponents will never forget Don's "Asiatic Spike"!

GB: Who were your toughest opponents?

DM: Well, I would have to go with three names - Pedro Morales, Jimmy "Superfly" Snuka and Tito Santana. Snuka put a great deal of wear and tear on me, which helped Santana defeat me for the Intercontinental championship. I include Tito in this group because he did beat me nonetheless.

GB: Now that you are working as an independent free agent with a much lighter work schedule, are you sitting back and enjoying life more?

DM: Oh, most definitely! The wear and tear that the W.W.F. puts on you and the repetition of matches take their toll. There is no variety in a situation like that. I can finally spend more time at home.

GB: Do you now have a set training schedule to stay in such great shape?

DM: Yes, I train three times a week. Occasionally, the travelling schedule interfered while on the W.W.F. circuit, but I always found my way to the gym. Now I can train, make my commitments and still have time left over to relax. Sometimes, on my off days, I'll do some cardiovascular work or bike riding. I have greater freedom in my choices and I think it's reflected in my ring performance.

GB: Can you put Don Muraco into one word?

DM: Consistency.

GB: When is your birthday?

DM: September 10th.

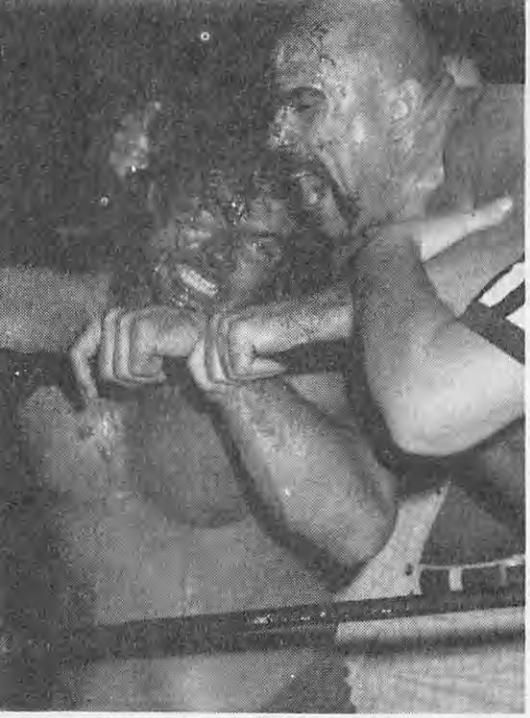
GB: What is your viewpoint on the state of wrestling and how has it evolved over the course of your career?

DM: There are many young guys who can be trained and educated about the sport. Some of them just don't want to learn. A great deal of them will learn the hard way—on their own. Now, I am looking forward to opening gyms around the country and become involved in different businesses, but I still want to give something back to wrestling. I've spent a great number of years in the sport. There's plenty of talent out there like Curt Hennig and the Ultimate Warrior plus others. They should really take advantage of the experience of someone like myself.

GB: How do you feel about the war between the major wrestling leagues in the United States?

DM: Unfortunately, I feel that there is no war to be quite honest. It is just the World Wrestling Federation or nothing. Even when I was with the W.W.F., I would be cheering for the other organizations, but their lack of inventiveness and whatever else

"I dictate where I want to wrestle and negotiate my own contracts. I like it that way...at least for the time being."



Muraco learned his lessons well. He is seen here in a 1977 match against the Mongolian Stomper, which took place in Tampa, Florida. photo: Pete Lederberg

it seems to take just doesn't put them up against the W.W.F. The general public only perceives the W.W.F. as the major league wrestling group.

GB: Now that gimmicks have overwhelmed the wrestling game, how do you feel about this drastic change from five or ten years ago when actual wrestling was the reason that fans purchased tickets?

DM: Only because it is dominated by the W.W.F., I would have to say that the talent has declined a great deal. There is not that big of a market for opportunity in this business anymore. A few years ago, different parts of the country would be looking for young talent to develop and mature. There were many places to start off such as Florida, Georgia, Southern California, even New York and Minneapolis. Without all of the regional promotions, the younger guys don't have many places to go and learn. There is a total lack of opportunity and involvement in regards to the big time promotions.

GB: Who would you consider the best wrestler today or perhaps of all-time?

DM: I would say myself. If not, I've been in the wrong business for the last 20 years.

GB: What are some of the best wrestling maneuvers used today?

DM: I like Sting's scorpion deathlock. The piledriver always gets the job done. The moves using the top rope are all very good. They are devastating, but have a greater chance for a margin of error. For my own tastes, the piledriver is best.

GB: If given the chance what would you change in the wrestling business?

DM: I guess I would change the people involved in putting on the promotions and booking the matches. They need to bring more variety to the live shows. Fans see too much of the same matches such as Flair vs Luger or Hogan vs Andre. I feel that there is plenty of room for many different matches and main events, rather than concentrating on the same faces week after week and month after month.

GB: How would you finish this sentence? Don Muraco is a man who...

DM: A man who has great confidence in himself and looks forward to receiving better results than he's had in the past.

GB: What advice would you give to someone thinking about a career as a professional wrestler?

DM: Don't be married. Approach it from ground level. A number of guys are naturals in this business, but you can't get the real feel of this sport until you've wrestled in front of a large crowd. Approach it from ground level—establish your foundation in this business.

GB: What are your views of the women involved in the sport as valets, managers and wrestlers?

DM: I've never really involved myself with the women in the business. They seem to offer a lot in their matches. I don't think the women now are as competent as those of several years ago, but they are a lot prettier. There is room for everything in wrestling, so I think it's totally up to the fans.

GB: If you had the opportunity to meet anyone in the world, who would it be?

DM: Well, both of these gentlemen are dead, but I would have liked to meet Woodrow Wilson and Elvis Presley.

GB: Who would you say are the most underrated and overrated wrestlers in the sport today?

DM: Most underrated would have to be Curt Hennig. Dusty Rhodes and Ric Flair are very overrated.

GB: How would you like to be remembered by the fans when you retire from the mat wars someday?

DM: I guess I'd like to be remembered as someone who gave 150% every time he was in the ring.

GB: Thank you, Don, and continued success.

DM: Thank you for the opportunity to express myself.

"I would have to say that the talent has declined a great deal. There is not that big of a market for opportunity in this business anymore."

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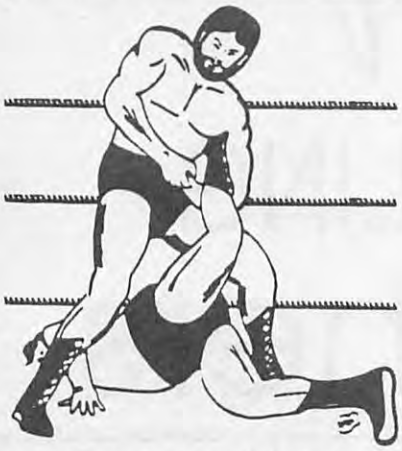

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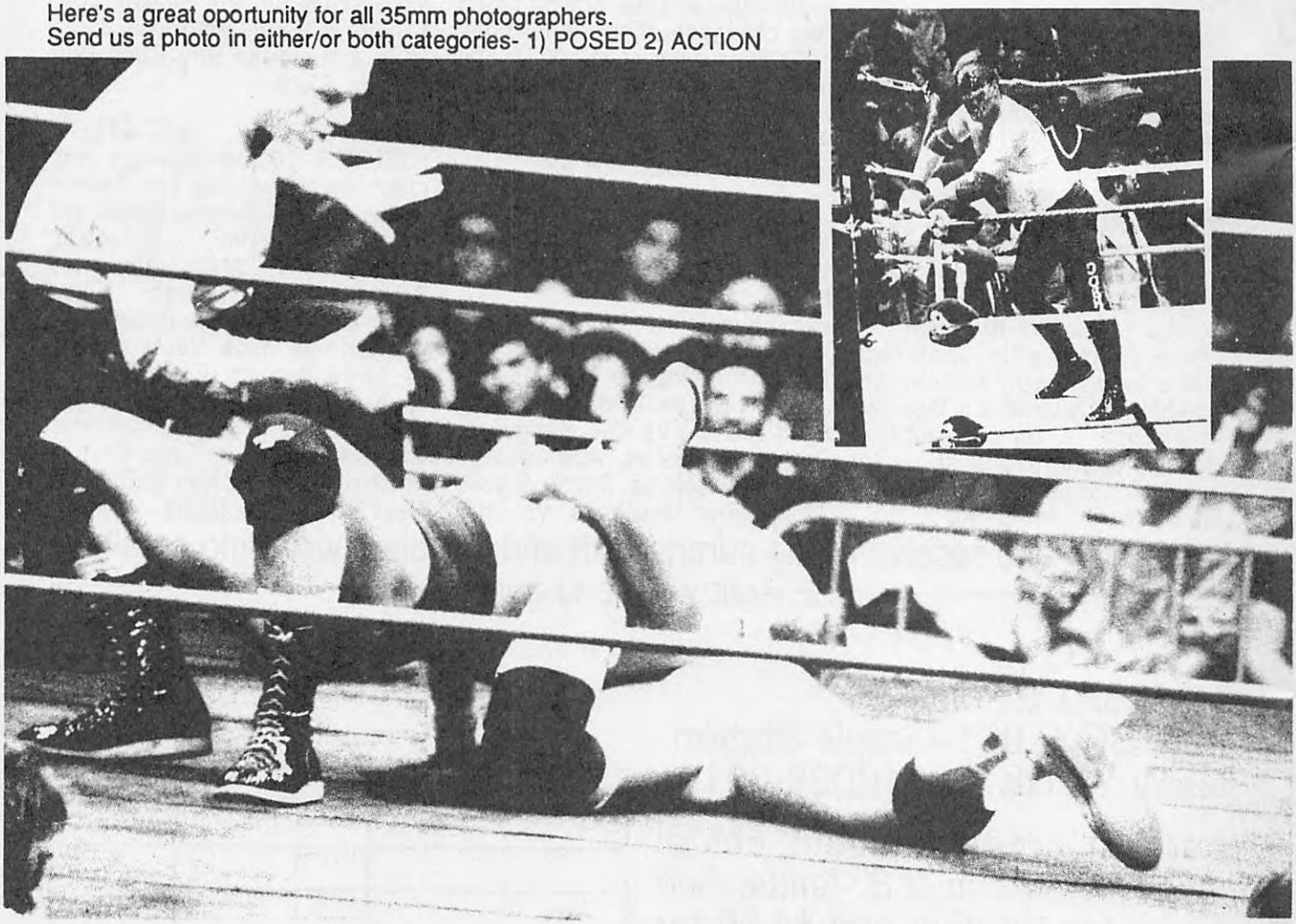

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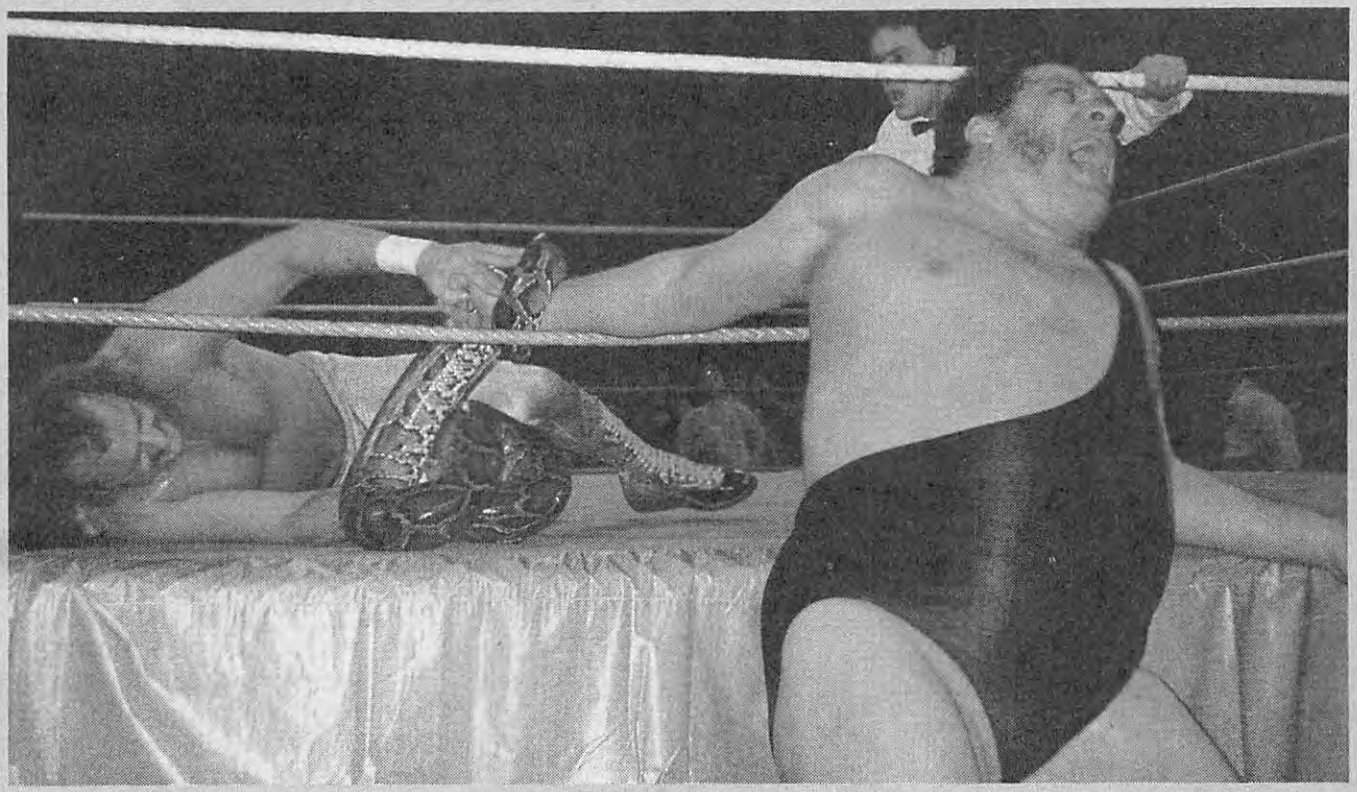
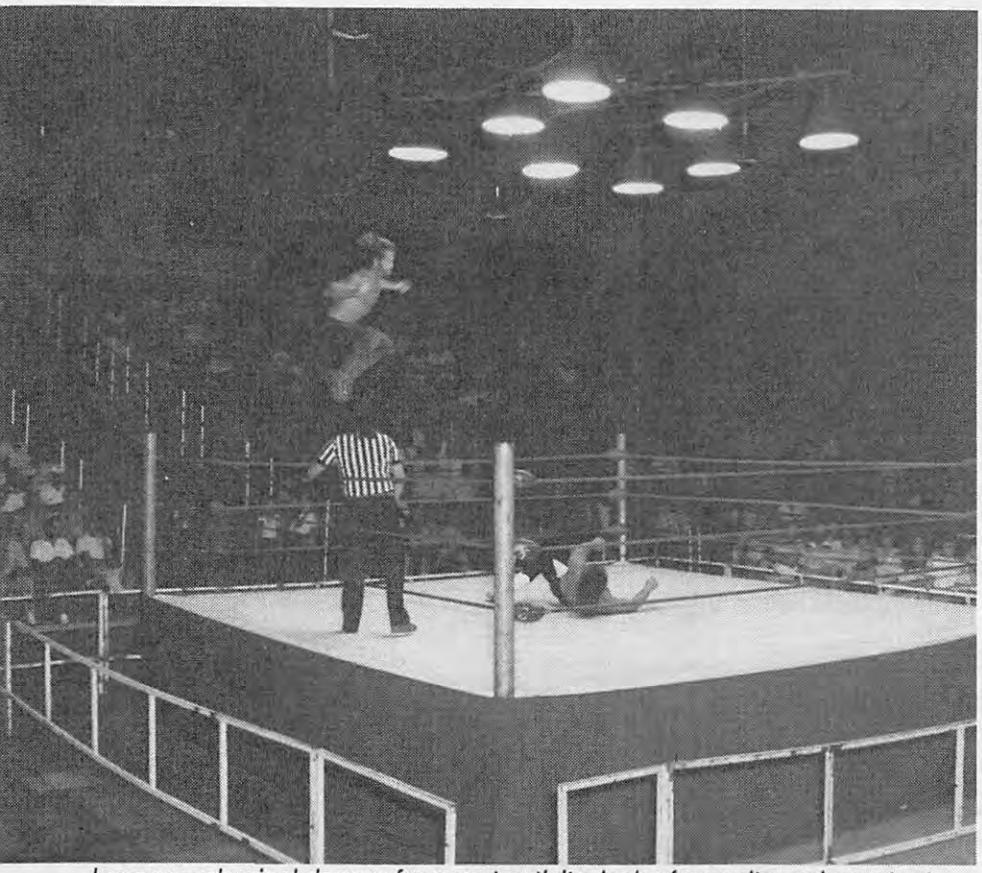


Ross W. Blair of Simi Valley, California sent in this dynamite action pix of Jake "the Snake" Roberts & Damien double-teaming Andre the Giant!

Jeff Chambers of Endicott, New York wins our posed photo category with this great shot of Afa Anoai-the Wild Samoan!

Contagious Disease Has Pro-Wrestlers Living in Constant Fear!

by Michael O'Hara photos by Howard Baum and Mike Rodgers



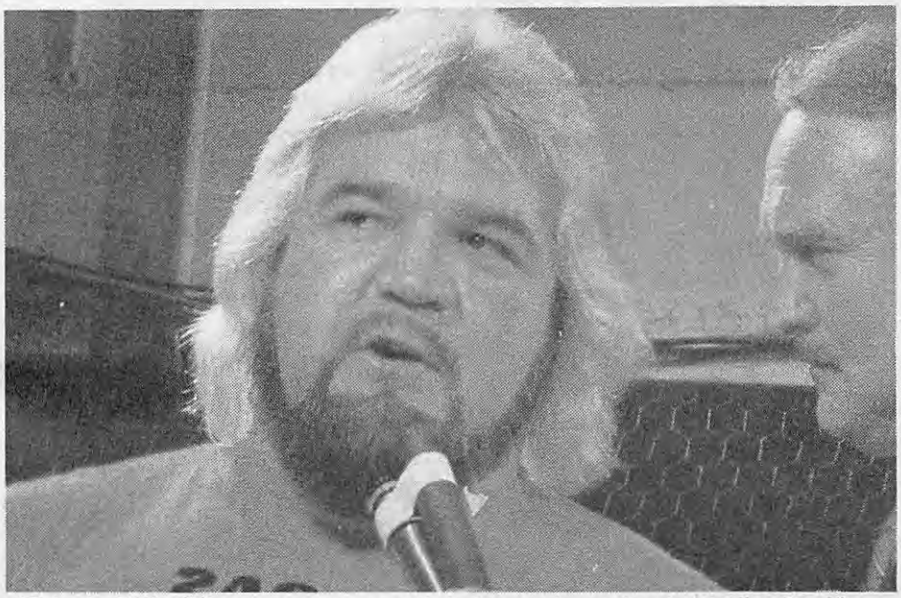
Low pay, physical danger from mat activity, lack of security and constant travel are problems that pale in comparison to the deadly threat of scabies!

The mysterious world of professional wrestling has long held the belief that the less you say about the sport's problems, the better. For the men who engage in mat warfare, nothing could be farther from the truth. The mat game, despite its tremendous rise in popularity in recent years is riddled with problems including low pay, physical dangers from mat activity, lack of job security, constant travel and limited, if any, hospital benefits. The wrestlers must constantly live with the paranoia of mob-like fans ready to enact a lynching; unclean working conditions which lead to numerous physical ailments and several other problems.

But one problem that all participants in the wrestling profession agree upon is the serious threat of "scabies". It has proven to be a more high risk disease relating to the grappling game than any other danger. This contagious disease is caused by a

Each time a wrestler enters the ring to do battle, he is at risk of contracting "scabies", a common contagious disease which is caused by a parasitic mite, that burrows under the skin and lays eggs. Some wrestlers have even passed this on to their wives and children!

The major difficulty remains that wrestlers, promoters and athletic commissions can find very few points to agree upon. It's not so much that they don't agree on this serious problem, but how to deal with this disease!



"Crippler" Rip Oliver went on record during an investigation in the Pacific Northwest stating that he contracted scabies on four separate occasions and had passed it on to his wife and sons.

parasitic mite that burrows into the skin and lays eggs. It is contracted on physical contact and has literally spread throughout many smaller regional booking offices as well as some major league organizations. The disease has even been contracted by the wrestler's families on more than isolated occasions!

Wrestlers, promoters and state athletic commissions can usually find very few points to agree upon. It's not so much that they don't agree upon the serious nature of the scabies problem, but how to actually deal with the situation in an effective manner which will please all parties concerned.

The scabies scandal arose some time ago in the Pacific Northwest, but has been conveniently swept under the rug by the media. The Oregon State Boxing and Wrestling Commission has several hearings with the hopes of cleaning up many of the problems within the mat game. The meetings did little more than throw more fuel into the fire as charges and counter-charges were tossed about in rapid succession between wrestlers, promoters and the commission.

James Hillman, who wrestles under the name of "Mean" Mike Miller contracted scabies and passed it on to his wife, Sutton, who was five months pregnant at the time.

After eliminating the disease under strict doctor's care, he contracted the disease again and passed it on to his wife once more and their newborn son.

Miller's wife was unable to take any treatment for the disease because she was nursing her infant and the medicine would penetrate her milk, tainting the child's food supply.

"It's like poison," stated Miller at the time. "That right there deprives my child of getting nourishment."

Rip Oliver, a well-known international mat star, also testified and went on record stating that he had contracted scabies on four separate occasions and has passed it on to his wife and two sons.

So far the various wrestling commissions have been lax in their enforcement of any cleanup campaign, preferring the promoters and wrestlers to work it out amongst themselves.

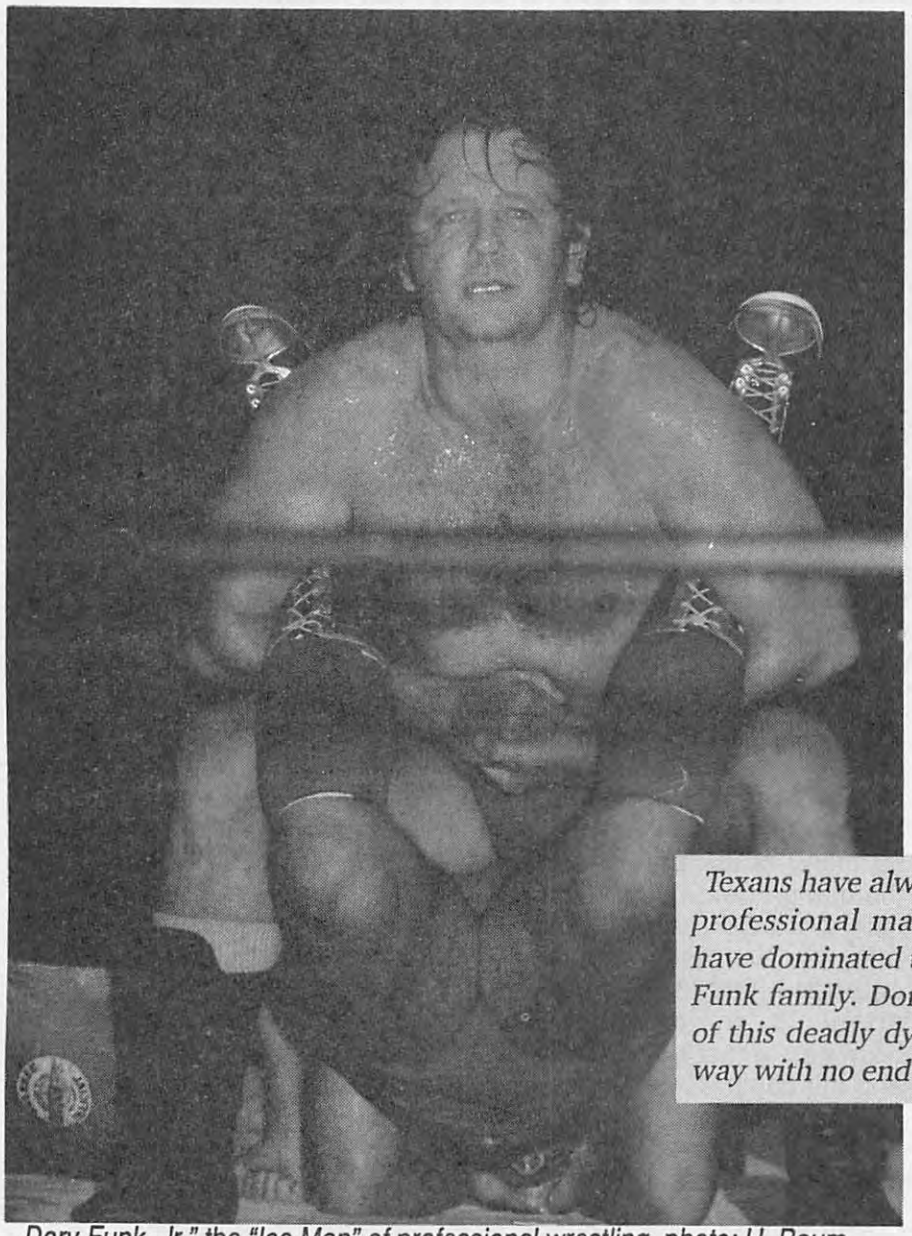
The commissions advise wrestlers with the contagious disease to notify the promoters of their situation. The promoter is then expected to remove the wrestler from active competition until the disease has passed.

The wrestlers are solely responsible for their own medical and legal expenses. That's a pretty difficult task when you're being paid, on average, $50-a-night. Picking up the tabs for medical insurance, gas, food, clothing and lodgings makes it extremely hard for a wrestler to be ethical in this situation. If he doesn't wrestle, he's flat broke and his family suffers. If he wrestles, he pays his bills, but passes the disease on to his fellow mat brethren.

There must be a better way.

Legend of the Month: Dory Funk, Jr.

by Michael O'Hara photos by Joseph Brown and Howard Baum



Dory Funk, Jr." the "Ice Man" of professional wrestling. photo: H. Baum

Texans have always been a powerful force on the professional mat circuits, however few names have dominated the grappling game as the famed Funk family. Dory Funk, Jr., the elder statesman of this deadly dynasty, continues on his winning way with no end in sight!

Dory Funk, Jr. is far from being finished, however the 24 year veteran of the mat wars has followed in his father's footsteps as a true wrestling legend. He's done it all in the course of his illustrious career including a memorable reign as N.W.A. World heavyweight champion.

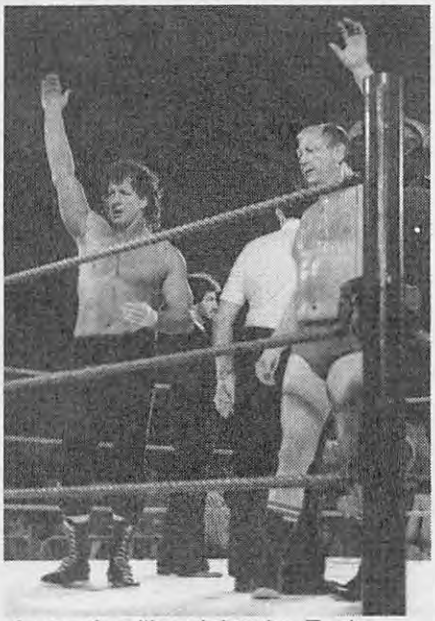
His ability has taken him all over the world as he has become a household name in the Orient and the Caribbean. Amazingly, he has done it all without the use of gimmicks or bizarre rantings. Always the gentleman, he remains business-like, in and out of the ring.

Many opponents have a hard time figuring out the cool contender, which is why he has earned the nickname of the "Ice Man". In the ring, his expression never changes and his stern blue eyes have the ability to stare a hole right through his ring foes.

Although calm and controlled in his actions, he has been booed many more times than applauded, but "Junior" and his wife of two years, Marti have learned to take it all in stride.

"When you're doing business, you can't show emotions. I generally don't show my emotions anyway, but as soon as you do in the ring, the other guy knows he has you rattled. You see, a lot of people think wrestlers aren't like what they see on television, but generally they really are like that," said Funk in a recent interview.

Dory's calm exterior has given him the reputation as a "thinking wrestler". He sets a goal and sticks to it until completed. He doesn't need to get flamboyant during the course of his quest. You can never really tell what the ringmaster will do when he



A very familiar sight: the Funks victorious! photo: Joseph T. Brown

steps between the ropes.

While the second generation mat man continously seems calm, he does hold some fears. Like us all, he sees nuclear war as the most terrifying situation in modern time.

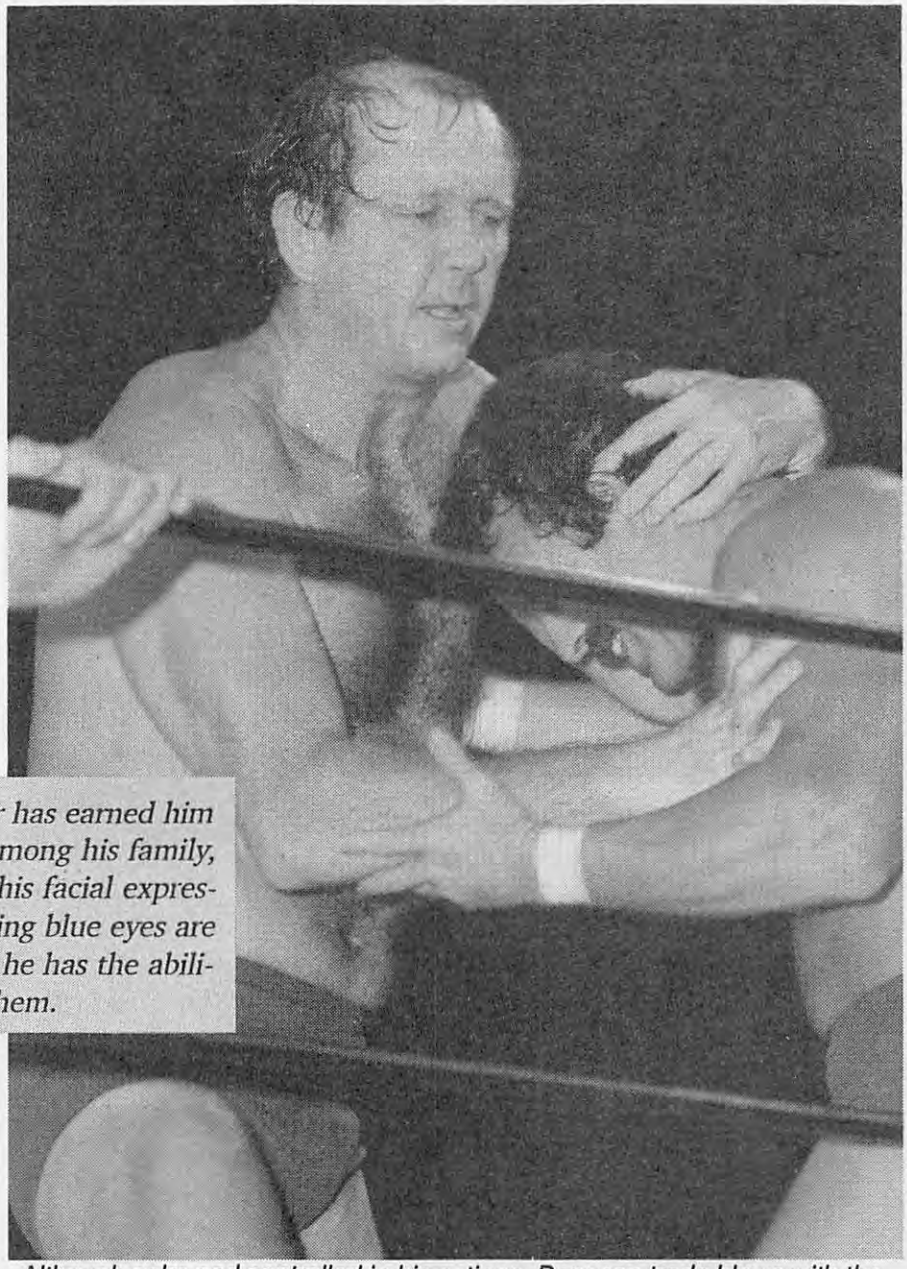
"I fear all-out conflict. War is something that is completely out of my hands. It would be a silly loss of life on both sides and yet we live with the concept each day," explained the Amarillo, Texas native.

"Another recurring nightmare I have and I don't know why it takes place in the dressing room," he said. "I'm struggling to lace up my boots. Somebody comes in and says 'Funk, you're on,' but I can't get my boots done. I am sweating like crazy and struggling like hell and finally get them tied. I go out there and the entire building is empty. Everybody is gone. For a wrestler, I guess this is the worse thing that could happen."

Dory Jr. continues to hold the Funk name high above the rest in the grappling game. With the help of brother Terry, another former N.W.A. World heavyweight champion, they plan on keeping the family name a respected force within the business.

Junior began wrestling at the age of seven while living at the Texas Boys' Ranch after moving to Amarillo from his birth place, Hammond, Indiana. His father, Dory Sr., guided the youngster throughout his mat activity.

"My father was a disiplinarian.



Although calm and controlled in his actions, Dory can trade blows with the wildest of opponents.

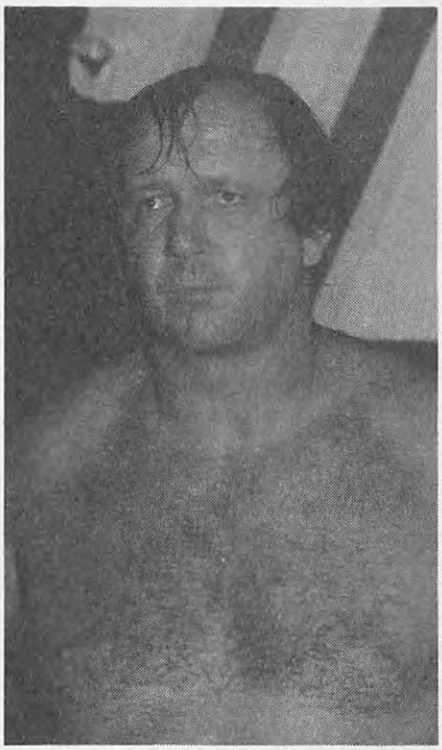
Dory's cool, confident demeanor has earned him the nickname of "the Ice Man" among his family, friends and foes. In center ring, his facial expression never changes and his piercing blue eyes are so intense that opponents swear he has the ability to stare a hole right through them.

Dory's belly-to-back suplex is a real spine tingler!

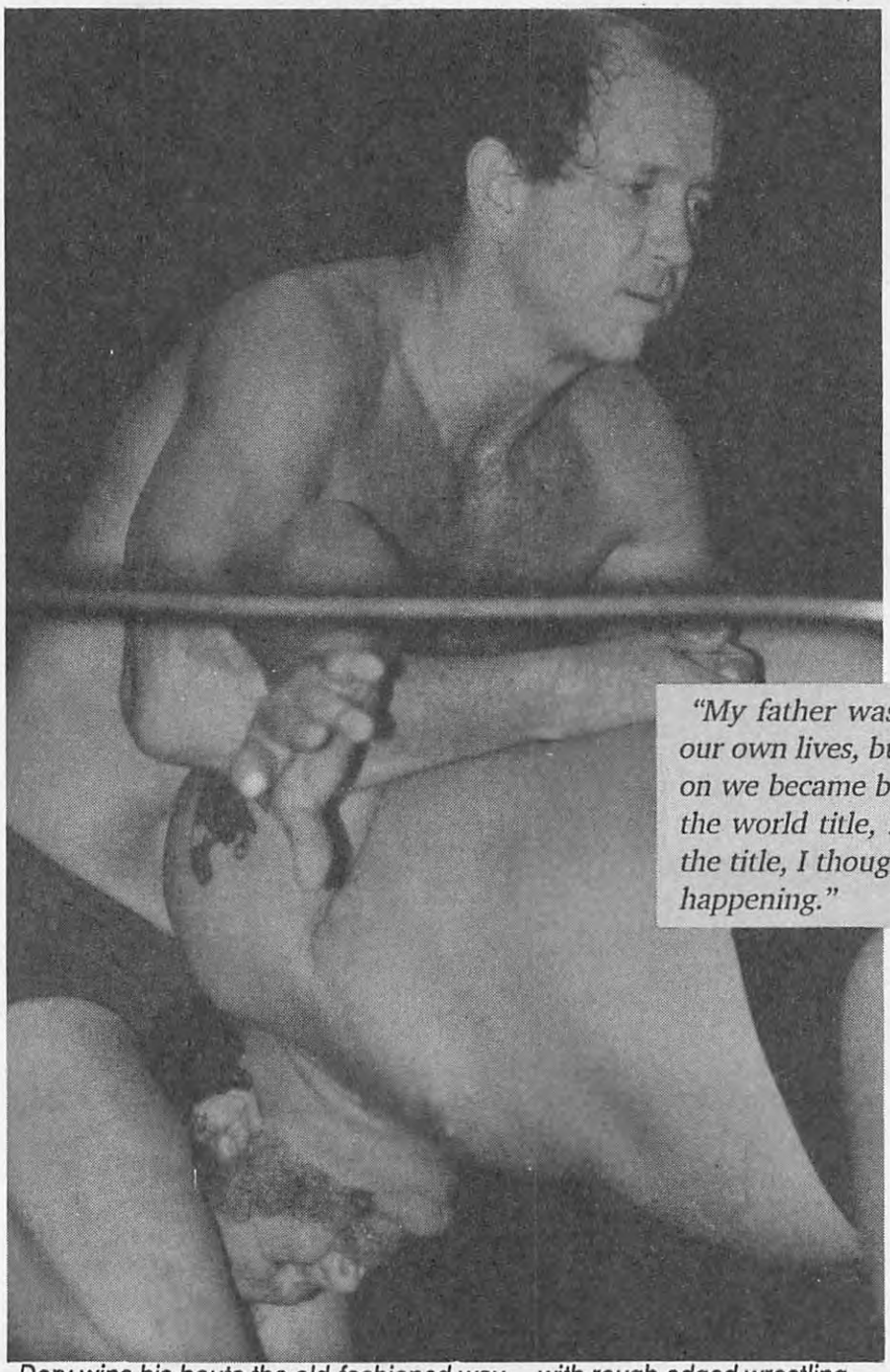
He let us live our own lives, but he was very rough on us. Later on we became business partners and when I won the world title it was a family win. When I lost the title, I thought it was all over, but things have kept happening."

The wrestling business has changed over the years. The names and the faces have continued to change. New gimmics have replaced the old, but Dory Funk, Jr. remains constant. Even though the sport has become more lucrative over the years, the former champion remains levelheaded.

"The changes in television coverage, which has occurred in the past three-to-five years is the single biggest difference in the business according to the mat star. With the advent of cable, the wrestling world has become a much smaller place and the emphasis is placed on traveling.



In a sport now filled with giant-sized muscle men, this second generation mat master can twist the biggest of men into the smallest of pretzels!



Dory wins his bouts the old-fashioned way... with rough edged wrestling tactics devoid of glamor and glitz.

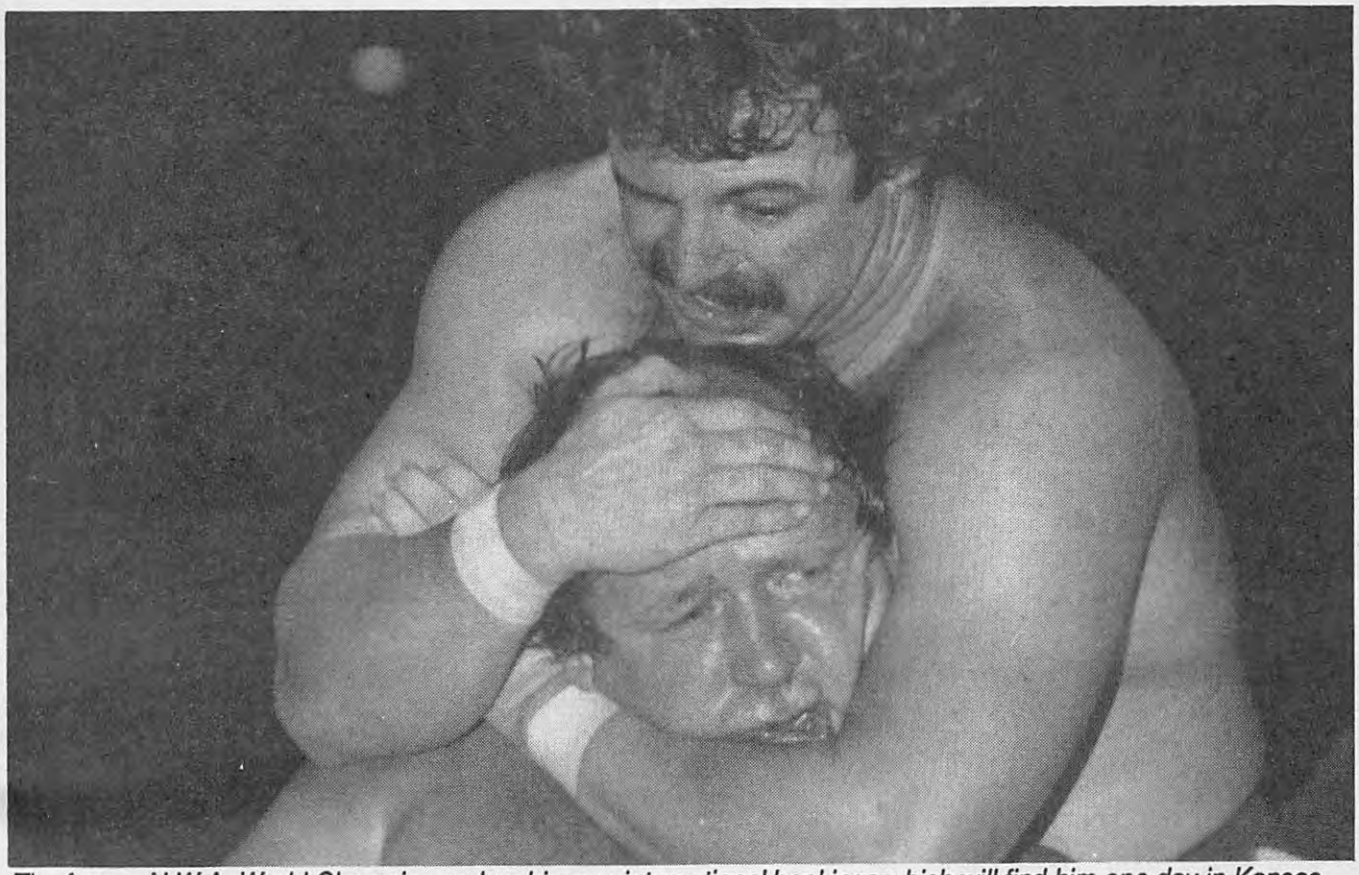
The travel is something that Dory's wife Marti enjoys, but admits that life on the road can get tiring at times. Although the grappling great spends most of his time competing in the state of Florida, he spends very little time in his newly acquired house in the Dunnellon area.

"My father was a disciplinarian. He let us live our own lives, but he was very rough on us. Later on we became business partners and when I won the world title, it was a family win. When I lost the title, I thought it was all over, but things kept happening."

Fortunètly for Mrs. Funk, the traveling is no major shock as she was a former airline stewardess and travel agent. She makes little fuss over the long tours on the road.

"Most times I travel with him and it's a lot nicer traveling with your best friend. Most people don't realize that wrestling is like a regular job..

There are plenty of day-to-day problems. Plenty of normal household things. There are



The former N.W.A. World Champion makes his own international bookings which will find him one day in Kansas City and the next night in Tokyo!

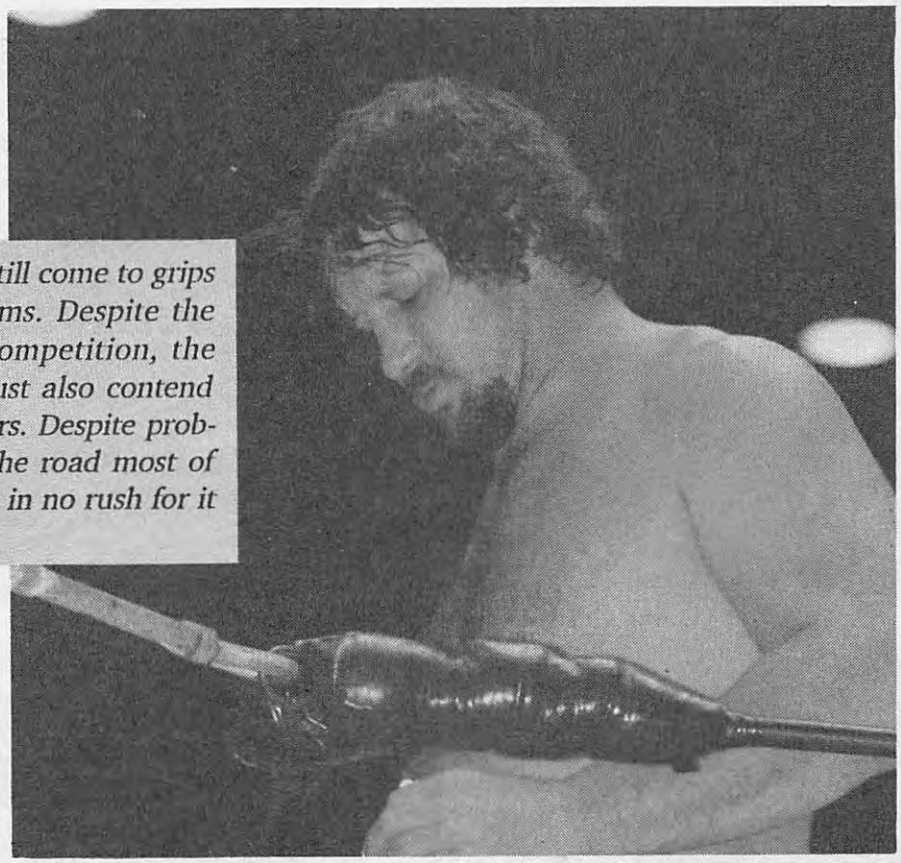
days when the lawn has to be mowed. Dory will say 'We've got to drive to West Palm Beach' and I'll tell him, 'But we've got to get the yard done.'"

So far the newlywed Funk couple have been able to work well as a tag team combo between travel and and home chores.

Dory and his wife, Marti must still come to grips with normal household problems. Despite the excitement of interntational competition, the happy-go-lucky Funk couple must also contend with yard work and home repairs. Despite problems that arise from being on the road most of the time, both agree that they're in no rush for it to end.

Despite the time on the road and the problems that go with it, the Funks are quite happy with the situation. Neither are in a hurry for it to end.

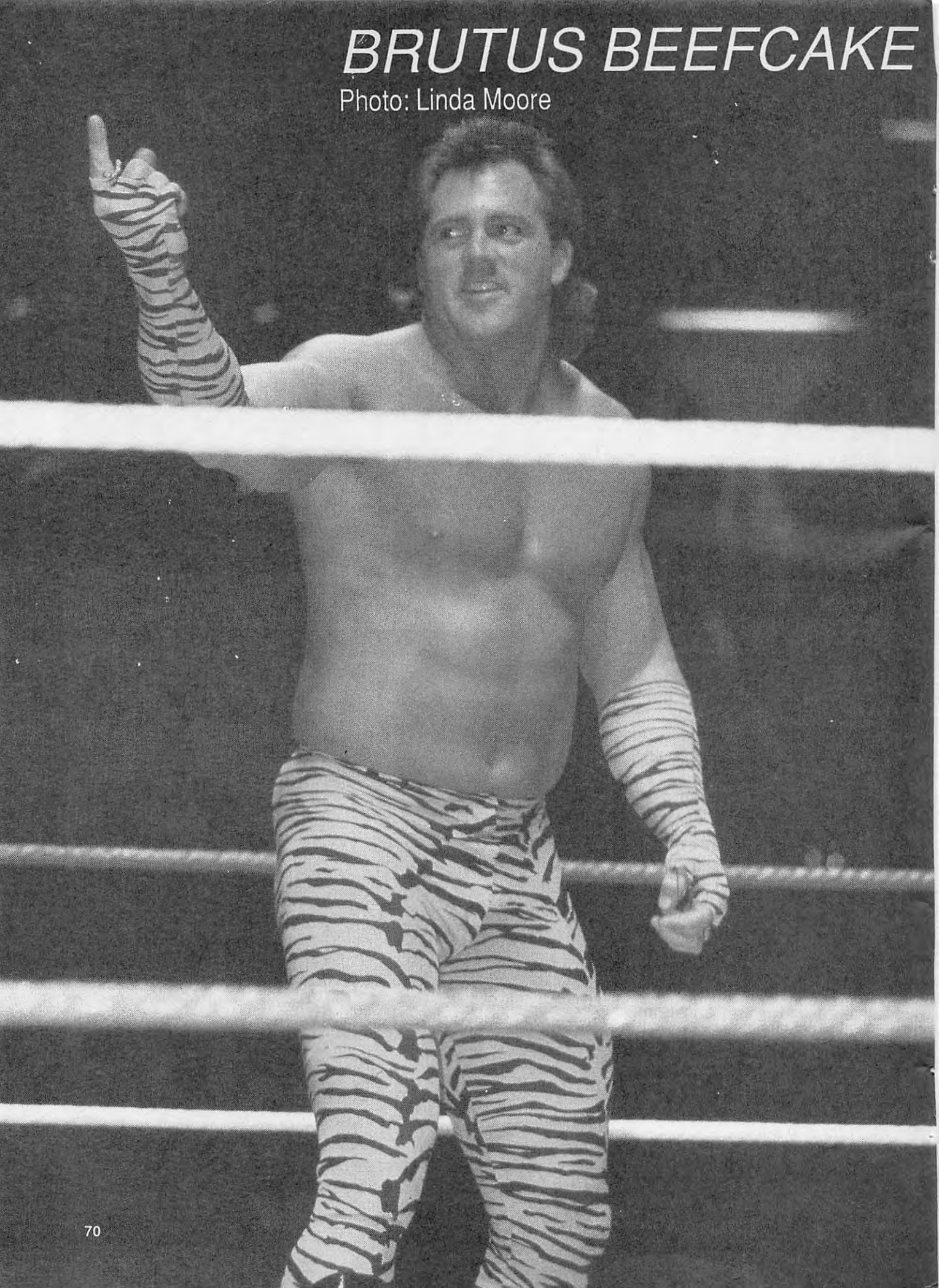
Marti sums it all up by saying, "Not in my wildest dreams did I ever think I would be involved. But it is so much fun..."



Terry Funk, Dory's younger brother, has a style that is totally different than his calm, older sibling. It is the difference in styles that has made them so successful in tag team competition.

BRUTUS BEEFCAKE

Photo: Linda Moore



SECRETS OF THE GREAT MUTA REVEALED!

by Michael O'Hara

While fans in the National Wrestling Alliance sit in awe of the incredible tactical arsenal used by the Great Muta, the promotion's executive officers are congratulating one another on unleashing the next superstars of the 1990's on American soil. Muta, through several years of diligent determination, has arrived!

Born on December 23, 1962 in Yamanashi Prefecture, Japan, Muta, whose real name is Keiji Muto had always aspired to become a big part of his native land's national pastime—professional wrestling. On October 5, 1984, he made good on that dream and squared off against Masahiro Chono in his professional debut on a card sanctioned by New Japan Pro Wrestling. Since the match, it has been victory after victory with no end in sight and no need to look back on past laurels.

The six-foot-two-inch, 230-pounder made his first venture out of Japan a winning one as

No, it's not the heir apparent to Bruce Lee's throne! His name is Keiji Muto, but fans in the N.W.A. know him better as the Great Muta. Photo: Maniax Ltd.

Despite his affection for crippling maneuvers, the mysterious ninja-styled grappler known as the Great Muta has taken the National Wrestling Alliance by storm! Fans would love to know more about this paint shrouded superstar of the squared circle and GOLD BELT WRESTLING MAGAZINE is more than happy to oblige!

he gained the World Wrestling Council tag team championship in Puerto Rico with partner Kendo Nagasaki, who is rumored to be a close relative of the rising youngster. His tour of the area exposed him to the American wrestling style and he took to it like a duck to water as he gained important wins over Chris & Mark Youngblood, Miguel Perez, Jr., the Invaders, Brad & Bart Batten among others.

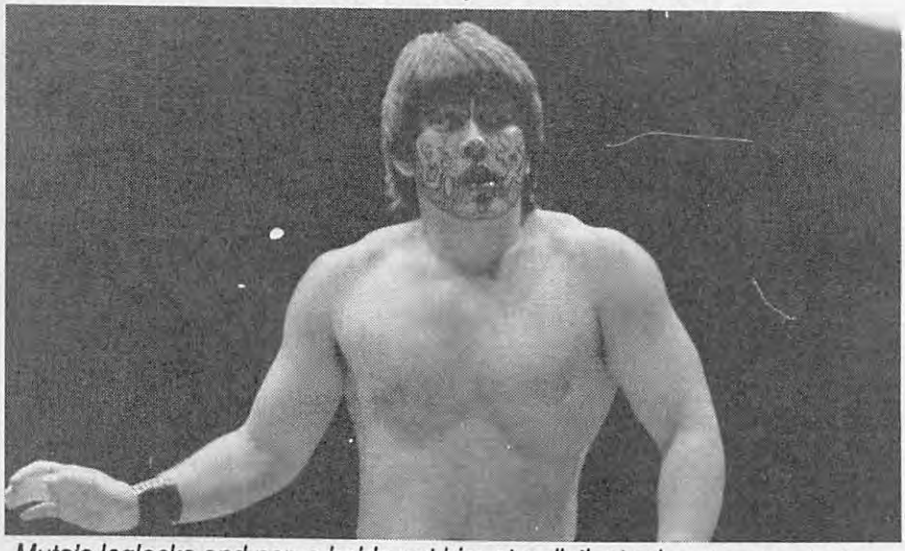
Travelling on to the Dallas, Texas based World Class Wrestling Association, Muta met up with Gary Hart and together they caused problems for many of the area's top stars including Kerry & Kevin von Erich, "Wild" Bill Irwin, "Gentleman" Chris Adams, Eric Embry, Steve Casey, Michael Hayes, Steve Cox and many more.

Muta's incredible combination of lightning-quick agility and punishing mat holds have made him a well respected member of wrestling's international fraternity. Even with devious tactics and the wild managerial efforts of Gary Hart, the Great Muta's legion of fans grows with each passing bout!

Leaving a path of destruction wherever they go, Hart and Muta joined forces in the National Wrestling Alliance and their results have been superb! The Oriental mat ace has run roughshod over every single opponent placed in his way and we're not talking about a "bum of the month club" either! "Hot Stuff" Eddie Gilbert, Steve Casey and the titanic Sting have all learned a wrestling lesson when locking up in mortal combat with the Great Muta.

As each obstacle falls by the wayside, it brings Muta that much closer to his eventual championship clash with the N.W.A. kingpin, "Nature Boy" Rick Flair. When that match takes place, be ready and be forewarned because you haven't see anything yet!

A bearded Muta thrilled fans in Puerto Rico and Texas when he wrestled under the name of the Super Black Ninja! Photo: Bob Miller

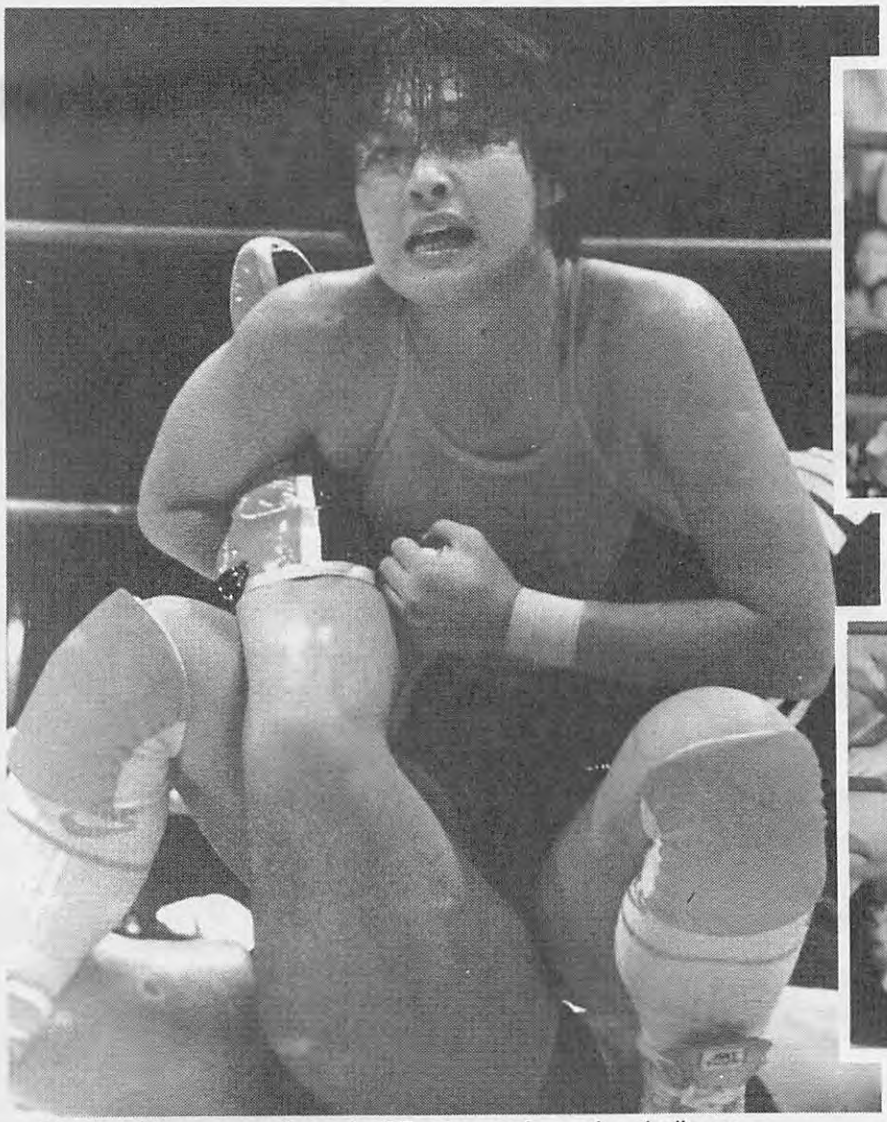


Muta's leglocks and nerve holds put him at a distinct advantage against most bewildered ring rivals Photo: Pete Lederberg

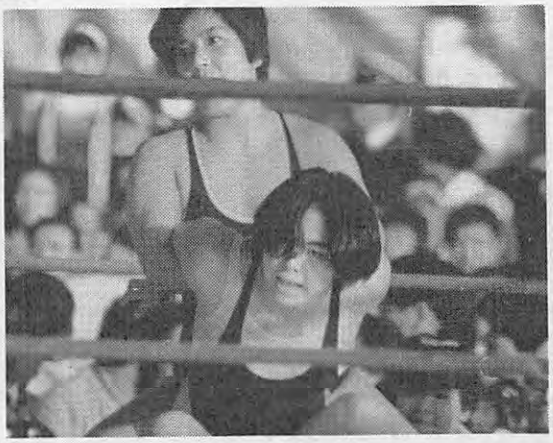
Grapplerettes of Japan

photos and text by Tom Burke

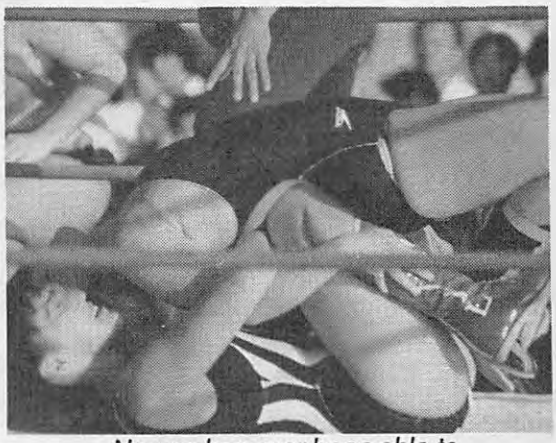
The ladies of the mat continue to draw huge crowds in Japan. Sellout cards where thousands of excited fans have been turned away has become commonplace. Like their male counterparts, the grappling gals have become national heroes and can be seen on network talk and variety television programs throughout the Orient.



Chigusa Nagayo applies a half Boston crab as she chalks up another impressive victory.



Jugar Yokota has Noriyo Tateno tied up with a double chicken wing.

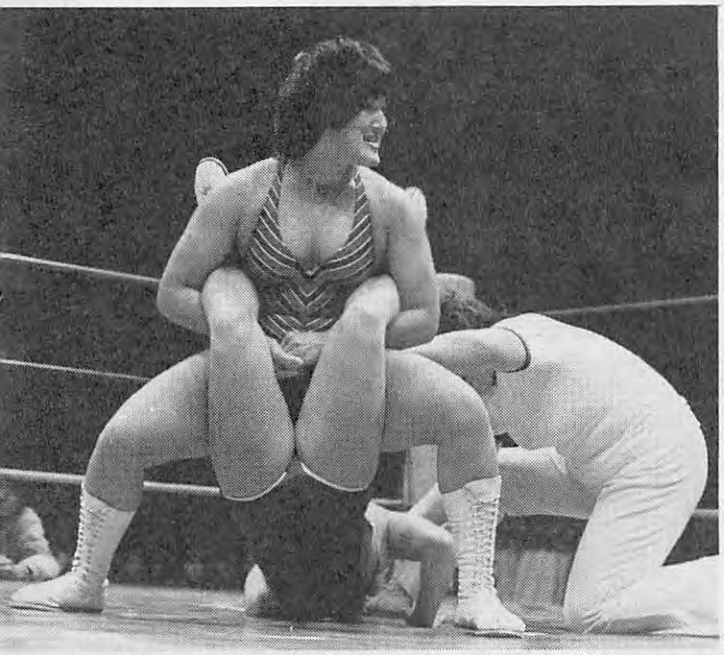


No one has ever been able to withstand the pain from Devil Masami's reverse octopus submission hold!

Why are the mat maidens so popular in Japan? The answer can be found in the explosive action coupled with high gloss showbiz glamor that has made this sport the most popular spectator attraction in the Land of the Rising Sun.

Itsuki Yamazaki's flying body presses her hapless opponent, prepares for the worst!

Kanako Nagatomo sends Yumi Ogura speeding towards the ropes with her Irish whip.



Itsuki Yamazaki submits under the force of Chigusa Nagayo's Boston crab.

High flying tactics, punishing mat holds and endless stamina have made Japanese women wrestlers superstars in the Far East.

Yukari Omori is as rough and tough as they come!

Chita Rivera shows no mercy on Nancy Kumi.

editor's note: Tom Burke, 31 Groveland Street, Springfield, MA 01108 publishes Global Wrestling, a monthly wrestling newsletter that sells for $1.50 per issue plus a stamped, addressed envelope. Mr. Burke is a regular contributor to this publication and has written on the sport for more than 20 years.

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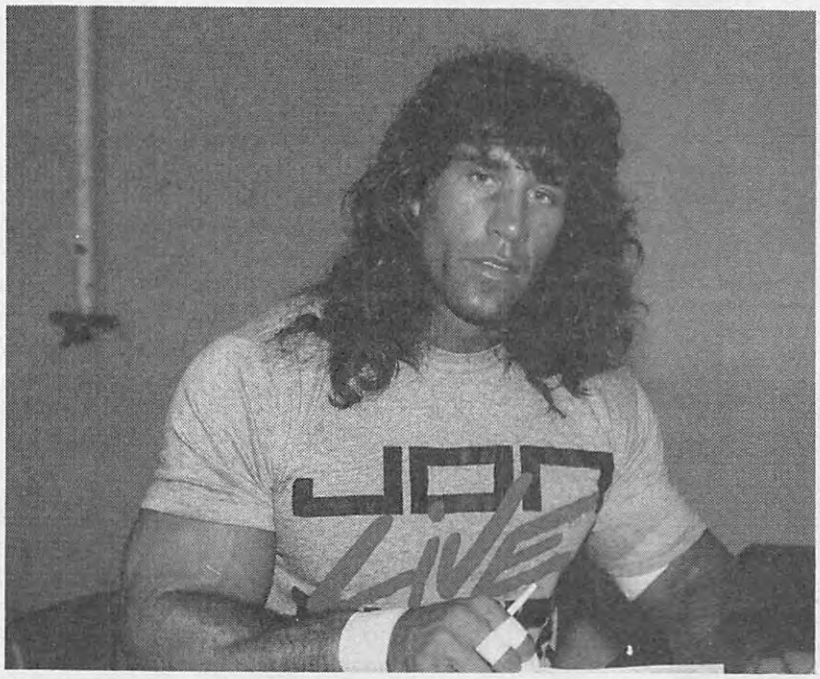

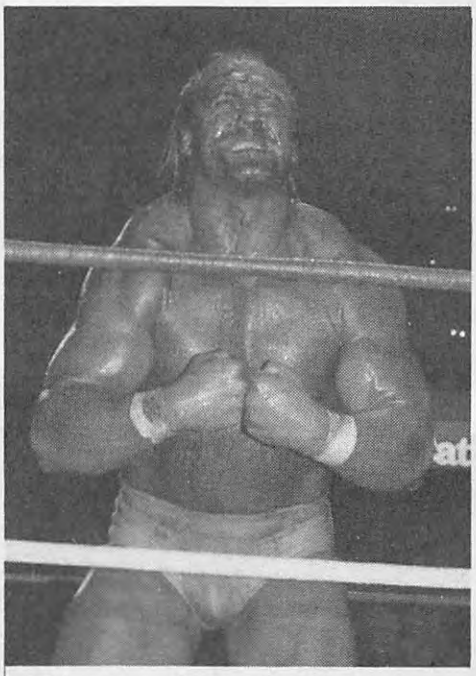

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